THEODORUS:

A

DIALOGUE

CONCERNING

THE ART OF

PREACHING.

BY

Mr. *DAVID FORDYCE*,
Late Profeſſor of PHILOSOPHY in the
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The THIRD EDITION.

To which is added,

A *Sermon* on the ELOQUENCE, and an
Eſſay on the ACTION, of the

PULPIT.

By the REVEREND

Mr. *JAMES FORDYCE*.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

To His Grace

THOMAS,

Lord Archbishop of *CANTERBURY,*

The following Dialogue is, with the greateſt Reſpect,

Inſcrib'd by

His Grace's

Moſt humble and
very obedient Servant,

J. Fordyce.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE late Mr. DAVID FORDYCE, *Author of the following Dialogue, was originally designed for the Church, to which he was early prompted, both by his Genius and Diſpoſition. To prepare himſelf for it was the whole Aim of his Ambition, and the whole Purpoſe of his Studies, for a Courſe of Years. What kind of Appearance he made as a Preacher is freely ſubmitted to thoſe who heard him. How he was qualified to appear in that Character, may be tolerably eſtimated by thoſe who did not, from what is now preſented to the Public; which may be ſuppoſed to contain the united Reſult of his Inquiries, Experience, and Obſervation, on that Subject.*

Soon after theſe Papers were finiſhed, he went abroad on his Travels, intending, if he lived, to publiſh them at his Return. But, mindful of the Uncertainty of human Life, he took care, in caſe of another Event, to leave that Charge expreſsly on the Editor; who he was ſure would not fail of executing it faithfully, ſince, beſides the Ties of brotherly Affection, he was connected with him by much cloſer as well as nobler ones, thoſe of the moſt entire and inviolable Friendſhip. The Editor little apprehended that ever his Friendſhip would be wanted in this way. But, alas! the Author, after a ſucceſsful Tour through France, Italy, *and ſeveral other Parts of* Europe, *when he was almoſt at home, and his Friends ſtood ready with open Arms and joyful Hearts to receive him, enriched, no doubt, with freſh Stores of Knowledge, and improved by higher Degrees of Experience, and of courſe fitted*

fitted for acting his Part in Society with greater Uſefulneſs and Reputation, —loſt his Life in its full Prime, by a Storm on the Coaſt of Holland. *The ſupreme Wiſdom ſaw this fit; and the ſupreme Wiſdom cannot err.——But ſurely, the Sentiments of Reſignation exclude not the Feelings of Humanity. The Friends of this Gentleman muſt ever be ſenſible of the Loſs they have ſuſtained by his Death. They do not chooſe, however, to enter into the Detail of his Character, but leave it to the beſt* Men *among his Acquaintance, to ſpeak of his Qualities as a* Man, *and to the* beſt Judges *among his Readers, to pronounce upon his Talents as a* Writer.

He is already known in the laſt Capacity, by his Dialogues concerning Education, *and his* Treatiſe of Moral Philoſophy, *publiſhed in the* PRÆCEPTOR. *As thoſe Pieces have met with a favourable Reception, it is hoped there is no need*

need of an Apology for offering this to the World. If it ſhall help to introduce a better Taſte, than now generally obtains, in the IMPORTANT ART *of which it treats, there will be room to rejoice that he had Time allowed him to finiſh it, before he was cut off in his Career of public Service. In the mean while, it is no ſmall Conſolation to the Editor, that he hath it in his Power to contribute towards erecting a new Monument to the Author, and placing his Memory in ſo honourable a Light, as that of a Diſciple of the moſt divine Maſter, and an Advocate for the moſt divine Religion; being fully perſuaded, that to ſtudy in the School of the former is the nobleſt Improvement of Reaſon, and that to plead the Cauſe of the latter, is its worthieſt Exerciſe.*

28 SE60

RULES

RULES FOR PREACHING;

WROTE BY

Dr. BYRAM of *Manchester*,

TO

TWO YOUNG CLERGYMEN, to whom he taught Short-hand.

BRETHREN, by this my Mind you'll know;
Learn to pronounce your Sermons slow;
Give ev'ry Word of a Discourse,
Its proper Time, and Life, and Force;
And urge what you think fit to say,
In a sedate, pathetic Way;

Grave

Grave and delib'rate, as it's fit
To comment upon holy Writ.
Many a Sermon gives Diſtate,
By being ſpoke in too much Haſte;
Which had it been pronounc'd with Leiſure,
Would have been liſten'd to with Pleaſure:
And thus the PREACHER often gains,
His Labour only for his Pains;
As (if you doubt it) may appear
From ev'ry Sunday in the Year:
For how indeed can one expect
The beſt Diſcourſe ſhou'd take Effect,
Unleſs the Maker thinks it worth
Some needful Care to ſet it forth?
What! does he think the Pains he took
To write it fairly in a Book,
Will do the Buſineſs? not a Bit——
It muſt be ſpoke as well as writ.

For what's a Sermon, good or bad,
If a Man reads it like a Lad?
To hear ſome People when they preach,
How they run o'er all Parts of Speech,
And neither raiſe a Word nor ſink;
Our learned Biſhops one wou'd think,
Had taken School-boys from the Rod,
To make Embaſſadors of GOD.

So

So perfect is the Chriſtian Scheme,
He who from thence does take his Theme,
And Time to have it underſtood,
His Sermon cannot but be good.
If he will needs be preaching Stuff,
No Time indeed is ſhort enough;
E'en let him read it like a Letter,
The ſooner it is done the better:
But for a Man who has a Head,
Of whom it may with Truth be ſaid,
That on Occaſion he can raiſe,
A juſt Remark, a proper Phraſe;
For ſuch a one to run along,
Tumbling his Accents o'er his Tongue,
Shews only that a Man at once,
May be a Scholar and a Dunce.

In point of Sermons, 'tis confeſt,
Our *Engliſh* Clergy make the beſt:
But this appears, we muſt confeſs,
Not from the PULPIT, but the PRESS.
They manage, with disjointed Skill,
The Matter well, the Manner ill;
And what ſeems Paradox at firſt,
They make the beſt, and preach the worſt.

Would Men but ſpeak as well as write,
Both Faculties would then unite,

The

The outward Action being taught,
To ſhew the inward Strength of Thought.
Now to do this, our Short-hand School,
Lays down this plain and general Rule——
Take Time enough, all other Graces
Will ſoon fill up their proper Places.

28 SE60

THE-

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The ART of PREACHING.

Duo ſunt, quæ, bene tractata ab Oratore, admirabilem Eloquentiam faciunt: quorum alterum eſt quod *Græci* ἠθικὸν vocant, ad Naturam, & ad Mores, & ad omnem *Vitæ Conſuetudinem* accommodatum; alterum quod iidem παθητικὸν nominant, quo perturbantur Animi & concitantur; in quo Uno regnat Oratio. Cic.

BRITISH MUSEUM

DIALOGUE.

AGORETES, PHILONOUS, THEODORUS.

ON a fine Summer-Morning, having broke looſe earlier than ordinary, from the indolent Languors of Sleep, I got into the charming Fields of *Altonia*, where the Groves waved their various Greens, and breathed a rich Perfume, which ſtole moſt agreeably upon the Senſe. A lovely Brook wandered among the Trees, in natural Meanders, and, by its Freſhneſs and pleaſing Murmurs, ſeemed to invite to Repoſe and Contemplation. The Opening of the Thicket preſented the Proſpect of a beautiful Plain, through which the Brook glided, refreſhing the Banks

on each ſide with its Cryſtal Treaſure; and this Proſpect was cloſed by a Sea-coaſt Town, which was almoſt ſurrounded by the Ocean, and the Spires and Smoke of which gave me the Idea of the *World* thrown at a proper Diſtance. I was walking along the Side of the Rivulet, and enjoying the Singing of Birds, and other Charms of this delightful Scene, in a thoughtleſs kind of Indolence; when I found the excellent AGORETES reclining at the Foot of an old Oak, on the Brow of a little Hill, tufted with natural Wood, which overlooked the Country and the Town, and commanded a full View of the Sea, then compoſed into a perfect Calm.

AGORETES is one of thoſe paſſionate Lovers of *Nature*, who admire Her with a Tenderneſs almoſt equal to that one entertains for a Miſtreſs, and talk in Raptures of the Beauty and Benevolence of her Aſpect. He loves to viſit her often in private, and pretends he receives Favours, of which vulgar Lovers are not admitted to partake; but for which, did they once taſte them, they would quickly reſign all other Pleaſures. He is deſign'd for the *Miniſtry*, for which he prepares himſelf from no ſordid mercenary Views, but merely to do good to his Fellow-creatures, in a Station which he thinks both honourable and uſeful. Of late Years, he has been a cloſe Student of *Divinity*, which he ſtudies in a Manner

ſomewhat

ſomewhat different from the Generality. It is chiefly in the two great Volumes of GOD, that of NATURE, and the HOLY SCRIPTURES, that he ſeeks *Divine Knowledge*. In both Theſe, he thinks their Author ſpeaks to us in a Language, at once the moſt intelligible and the moſt awful; which the Simple-hearted underſtand beſt, or rather *feel* moſt ſtrongly, whilſt the high-minded and over-nice Students, loſe themſelves in the Regions of wild Chimera or fruitleſs Criticiſm. He reckons the Study of the Works of GOD, one of the moſt refined Species of Devotion we can offer to *Him*; and uſes to ſay, that he often imagines himſelf in the *Temple*, or rather the *Sanctuary* of the Almighty, whilſt he treads the open Courts of Nature, and ſurveys thoſe maſterly Drawings which are hung up every where round him. From theſe Studies, as well as from the Happineſs of his natural Temper, he has derived the ſtrongeſt Diſpoſition to Piety and Goodneſs, I ever knew united in one Man. Theſe ſeem ſo much to rival with each other the Poſſeſſion of his Heart, that by a mutual Influence they brighten and exalt one the other. When AGORETES thinks he is alone, he often breaks out into paſſionate Raptures on the Beauties of Nature; which, to a Friend, he will ſometimes call his *Morning* and *Evening-Hymns*.

I caught him now in one of Theſe, and was too deſirous of joining in the ſolemn Service to offer to interrupt him. He had a Book in his Hand: now he opened, then he ſhut it: ſometimes he gazed at the ample Sky, and ſometimes he ſurveyed the ſurrounding Hills and Groves, the contiguous Plains, and the peaceful Ocean, that lay ſtretched out below into a boundleſs Proſpect: then pauſing for a while, he broke out in this manner, with an Air of Wonder and Tranſport:

——"O beauteous NATURE! His ſtupen-
"dous Workmanſhip! How mild and magni-
"ficent thy Aſpect, ever fair and ever flouriſh-
"ing! How ſimple the Deſign; yet how au-
"guſt and great! Source of juſteſt Order,
"ſweeteſt Harmony, and inexpreſſible Delight!
"What Frugality, amidſt infinite Profuſion!
"Nothing neceſſary ſpared; nothing uſeleſs or
"redundant, of all thy teeming and exhauſtleſs
"Treaſures! Where ſhall I begin; where
"ſhall I end? What Clue ſhall I find, to con-
"duct me through the amazing Labyrinth of
"Nature?"——

Then ſtarting up on his Feet, and looking with an Air of Veneration towards Heaven, he thus went on:

——"But

——" But methinks I hear the Voice of " GOD ſounding thro' his Works, and behold " the Parent of the Univerſe ſitting at its Head, " enthroned in Light and Goodneſs inconceiv- " able! Methinks I ſee him filling the huge " Machine with vital Breath and active Spirit, " turning round the perennial Wheels of Na- " ture, with a ſilent and invariable Harmony, " and, by the moſt ſimple Movements, guiding " the vaſt and complicated Machinery, through " its ſucceſſive Revolutions, to full Perfection! " Whilſt with growing Tranſport, I paſs on " from Scene to Scene, always wonderful, and " always new; I forget myſelf, and am atten- " tive to *Him* alone who has placed his Works " in all the Majeſty of Wiſdom before my Rea- " ſon, to demand and force its Admiration! " Good GOD! With what Triumph and Con- " gratulations, do I ſalute an happy World! " With what Gratitude and Veneration, do I " adore its bounteous Author!——But what " ſtrange attractive Tie links me thus to uni- " verſal Nature? Why ſo pleaſed when it flou- " riſhes and ſmiles? Why condole when its " lovely Forms decay? Whence this Sympathy " of Heart and ſecret Union? It is Thou, O " *Sovereign Power!* O *Univerſal Goodneſs!* it " is Thou, who haſt drawn the endearing Link, " and given thy fair Creation ſuch Power to

" move and charm. Thou haſt made the hu-
" man Heart an Uniſon to Nature: Thou haſt
" ſown thoſe tender Inſtincts that ſhoot ſo high,
" and ſpread ſo wide. By theſe powerful Ties,
" doſt Thou draw Man to Thyſelf, the Origi-
" nal of all Beauty, and Parent of all Good.
" By this wondrous Conſtitution Thou unveileſt
" to him thine eſſential Glory, *Thou*, without
" whoſe Emanations all is Void and Darkneſs,
" and in Whom alone he can find Light, and
" Life, and Joy unutterable."

Here AGORETES pauſed a while, and then ſat down, apparently loſt in the Depth of his Meditations. I went forward, and touching him on the Shoulder, ſaid: So, my Friend, I find you have been at your *Morning Hymn*, celebrating the Works of Nature, and invoking the Author of our common Felicity.

I confeſs, PHILONOUS, ſaid he, I have been attempting to liſp out the Praiſes of Him that made us, though in very imperfect Accents. For indeed, how faintly at beſt can we trace the Outgoings of the *Ancient of Days* in his Works? How unmeaningly, after our utmoſt Efforts, muſt we ſpeak of Him who dwells in unapproachable Light? I love, however, to peruſe the ſacred Volume, and to read every Page into an Hymn of Gratitude.

Surely

Surely they are happy Scholars, ſaid I, who can underſtand thoſe bright Characters of Divinity, which are to be found there, and who walk out with the Morning-Sun, and under the Evening-Sky, till they become acquainted with GOD.

O! PHILONOUS, ſaid he, does it not ſurprize you, that Men can behold, ſo often behold the Creation, this glorious Seat of Being and of Beauty, and not look up through *It* to its almighty Maker?

I acknowledge, AGORETES, ſaid I, I have often wondred how it happens, that the Colouring and mere Drapery of Nature, ſhould detain, nay quite engroſs the Eye of the Generality of Spectators, whilſt they regard not the *Artiſt* at all, or overlook the moſt exquiſite Touches of his Pencil, and have no Conception of the great Deſign.

Blind Man, replied AGORETES, that ſees not GOD, though He is every where to be ſeen! Deaf Man, who hears not GOD, though He ſpeaks aloud through all his Works! I have often, PHILONOUS, conſidered the Works of GOD as his *Language*, his *Words*, which ſpeak to Men his ſupreme Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs. I have ſometimes, with a noble Au-

thor *, conſidered the Creation as a SERMON, the moſt ſolemn and awful that was ever preached, and the Creator as the Great PREACHER. That Author has ſomewhere theſe Words, as I remember. "The Works of Nature appear to "me the better Sort of Sermons; and every "Flower contains in it the moſt edifying Rhe-"toric, to fill us with Admiration of its omni-"potent Creator." This powerful Preacher, PHILONOUS, preaches to all in intelligible Language, and in a Stile as various as his Works. In conformity to this Idea, the great Maſter of our *Britiſh* Drama ſays ſomewhere,

—— *Our Life, exempt from public Haunt,*
Finds Tongues in Trees, Books in the running Brooks,
Sermons *in Stones, and Good in every thing.*

In ſhort, the *Deity* addreſſes to our Eyes, our Ears, our every Senſe; paints his Conceptions to our Imagination, unfolds them to our Underſtanding, and impreſſes them on our Hearts.

What pity is it then, ſaid I, that ſo *divine* a Preacher ſhould preach to ſuch a liſtleſs Audience, and that ſuch various Eloquence ſhould make ſo faint an Impreſſion as it generally does! If the Language is univerſal and expreſſive, as you

* The Duke of *Buckingham*.

you ſay, why is it not better underſtood, and heard with more Attention?

To diſcover the ſeveral Sources of this Ignorance and Inattention, ſaid AGORETES, would require an ample Diſcuſſion and much Leiſure to make it. But we may piouſly preſume that the Fault is not in the *Preacher*, who ſpeaks with a Voice heard through all the Earth, and in Words ſounding to the Ends of the World. He whiſpers to us ſoftly in the Breeze, admoniſhes us by Rain, Sun-ſhine, and fruitful Seaſons; ſweetly ſoothes us by the Murmur of Streams, and the Singing of Birds, or awfully alarms us by Thunder, Storm, and Whirlwind; and, in ſhort, inſtructs us in the Natures, Uſes, and various Figures and Relations of things, by Colours, Sounds, and all the Varieties of Light and Shade. When I conſider theſe and other admirable Acts of this *divine* Orator, I cannot help thinking, that the moſt Eloquent of the *preaching Tribe* might learn many uſeful Hints from ſo great an Exemplar.

I ſhall be glad, AGORETES, ſaid I, to hear you point out ſome of them. For I cannot ſo readily enter into your Meaning.

Pray, PHILONOUS, replied he, have you never obſerved what regular coherent Schemes

the Author of Nature is ſtill carrying on, not only in greater and general, but in leſſer and individual Syſtems; from what ſimple and inconſiderable Beginnings, He deduces their firſt Proceſs; by what natural and eaſy Stages, He conducts them through their ſeveral Periods and Revolutions; making one introduce and pave the way to another, and every Step of the Progreſs conſpire moſt ſteadily and uniformly to the great Point in view, the Perfection of the Syſtem He intended to produce? By theſe gradual Advances, and the various Appearances which the Syſtem, be it Plant or Animal, ſucceſſively aſſumes, does not the ſupreme Artiſt inſtruct us in its Conſtitution, Œconomy, and Uſe, intereſt us in its ſeveral Fortunes with Pleaſure or Regret, as it flouriſhes or decays, and teach us what Accidents produce one or the other, and by what Culture it attains the Perfection peculiar to the Kind? Should not a Preacher, in like manner, be Simple in his Beginning; enter upon his Subject without much Parade; unfold it gradually, ſo that it ſhall ſtill riſe and gather Strength as it advances; keep one weighty Point in his Eye; make one Part ſerve to uſher in another, and all concur in throwing Light upon the Truth he wants to illuſtrate, or enforcing the Duty he wants to recommend? By this means, he will make his Diſcourſe a regular and compact Work, conduct the Hearer's Mind eaſily

eaſily along the ſeveral Parts, and make him not only comprehend his main Deſign, but feel its Energy and Importance.

This is not the only Hint which a Preacher may borrow from the great Model I juſt now mentioned. It is obſervable, PHILONOUS, that the Author of Nature employs different Means or Inſtruments, according to the different Natures and Qualities of the Subjects he acts upon, in order to attract our Attention, to excite our Admiration, and to engage our Affections. Thus he employs Heat to rarify, and give an expanſive Force to, ſome Bodies; Cold to contract, and give a Conſiſtence and Solidity to, others; Air and Moiſture, to feed and fertilize; Sun and Drought to warm and ripen. Some Creatures he inſtructs in the Operations of Nature, and the Methods of Self-Preſervation, by means of Tints and Colours, others by Sounds, others by Scents, and all by general Laws, the Influence of which is ſteady and uniform. This I call the *various Language* of GOD, or the *different Styles* of the ſovereign Preacher; which are admirably adapted to every Species of Being, and their reſpective Capacities. In his more auguſt Works, he employs the Style of Majeſty, and ſpeaks the true *Sublime*. In his minuter Works, wonderful Correctneſs and Elegance appear: and in all his Works, inimitable Simplicity and Beauty.

Sometimes

Sometimes he inſtructs us by Analogy, and ſpeaks in Tropes and Figures, if I may be allowed the Expreſſion; at other times he talks, exhorts, and admoniſhes in a Language ſo plain and familiar, as all may underſtand, and none can miſtake but the unattentive or the perverſe. Should not a Preacher, in Imitation of ſo divine a Pattern, vary his Style and Manner, according to the Nature of his Subject and the Capacities of his Audience? For as the ſame Dreſs will not ſuit every Shape, neither will the ſame Style agree to every Subject: And there are as great Diverſities in the Genius and Capacity of different People, as in their Shape and Air; to whom if a Speaker addreſs himſelf in the ſame unvaried manner, he may perhaps ſurpriſe, but certainly he cannot edify all.

The laſt Hint I would take notice of, continued AGORETES, is this, that as vaſt as the Profuſion of Art is, which runs through the whole Compaſs of the Creation, it is generally in ſome ſort *hidden* by the great Artiſt, at leaſt he hardly makes any Oſtentations of it. He ſeems to amuſe us with the exterior *Decorations* of the Machinery, but covers up from View the *Springs* which actuate the whole. We ſee the Phenomena, and feel the Effects, but are left to gueſs at the latent Cauſes. Though from a ſuperficial Survey, one would imagine, that Nature con-

ſulted chiefly the Ornament of her Productions; yet to an accurate Obſerver, ſhe appears principally intent upon their Uſefulneſs. Every thing elſe is made ſubordinate to this, and all the external Colouring is only the Gloſs and Varniſh of the moſt finiſhed internal Structure, or elaborate Symmetry of Parts. Even in the wildeſt and moſt uncontrouled Play of Nature, we may diſcern maſterly Strokes of Art; and on the other hand, in her more laboured Pieces of Workmanſhip, we may obſerve, an apparent Air of Eaſineſs, and a noble kind of Negligence. So that ſhe gradually prepares and powerfully beſpeaks our Attention, rather by the Importance of her Deſign, and the Dignity of her Action, than by a direct Addreſs and ſtudied Parade. Now I ſhould eſteem *him* the beſt Orator, who acts in conformity to this ſupreme Model; who, whilſt he carries his main End ever in his Eye, ſeems to be doing ſomething elſe; who regards Ornament only as ſubſervient to this, conceals the Depth of his Art under an Air of Simplicity, and rather commands our Attention by the Weight of Matter, than ſolicits it by the Shew of Eloquence.

I have often heard, ſaid I, that one of the principal Excellencies of Art was to *hide Art*. But I believe it is much eaſier to diſcover, than to imitate, the marvellous Art of this divine Preacher;

Preacher; who, when He has a mind to rouſe our Attention, can ſpeak to the *Heart* as well as to the *Ear*, with a Force which no Mortal can reſiſt, and a Perſuaſion which no Prejudice can elude. Therefore I am afraid, the Perfection of this Model may diſcourage, inſtead of inviting, us to copy after it.

Maſters in every Art, replied AGORETES, generally propoſe to their Pupils the moſt perfect Models they can find; not ſurely to damp their Attempts, but to inſpirit them, and at once to ſecure them againſt the Defects and Errors into which leſs finiſhed Patterns might lead them, and ſo point out to them the Perfections of the particular Art they want to teach them. It is enough, if they are ever approaching to the Standard of Beauty, tho' they ſhould never be able to reach it.

I ſhould be glad to hear your Opinion, AGORETES, ſaid I, coneerning this *Standard of Beauty*, with regard to the Art of which you have been ſpeaking. In what does it conſiſt, and with what Maſters is it to be found?

Alas! PHILONOUS, ſaid he, what a Taſk would you put me upon? It belongs only to a Practitioner, a *Maſter of the Art*, to tell what that is; and it would ill become one to attempt ſuch

ſuch an arduous Taſk who has ſcarce imbibed the firſt Principles of the Art, and never once attempted the Practice of it. For, like all other Arts, I believe it is beſt learned by Practice, and ſtudying the trueſt Models. But *where* thoſe are to be found, is hard to gueſs, and it were too arrogant in me to pretend to determine. Every Age has had its favourite Ones, and one Nation differs as much from another in its Method of Preaching, as in its Language and Manners. Indeed it has been generally influenced by theſe, and formed on the prevailing Taſte and Genius of the People, among whom it has been practiſed, undergoing the ſame Revolutions, which thoſe have undergone.

I think it were worth while, ſaid I, to trace the different *Methods* which have prevailed, and the ſeveral *Models* which have been in vogue in different Ages and Nations; becauſe from ſuch a Review, one might collect many uſeful Obſervations to direct one's Practice, and perhaps to diſcover the moſt genuine and authorized Standards.

I am much of your Opinion, ſaid AGORETES; for *Preaching* is a ſort of public Speaking; and public Speaking depends on that which is private; and again private Speaking is always influenced by the Sentiments, Complexions, and Characters

Characters of the Speakers. Therefore, in order to go through that Review you mention, of the different Manners of Preaching, that have prevailed in different Ages and Nations, it would be neceſſary to examine the different Ways of public Speaking; and that Inquiry would naturally include in it a Detail of the Manners of the Times: but this, I fear, would lead us out of our Depth, and perhaps after all be more curious than uſeful.

I know, AGORETES, ſaid I, you have often thought upon the Subject; and though a full Diſcuſſion of it might be a very complicated Affair, and require deep Knowledge of ancient and modern Times, yet I imagine ſome ſlight Touches, or general Strictures on it, might help us to hit upon the Standard we are in queſt of.

Since you urge me ſo warmly, PHILONOUS, ſaid he, I ſhall frankly communicate a few Obſervations, and indeed they are but ſuperficial ones, that I have made on the different Veins of public Speaking and Preaching, which have run through different Nations and Ages.

You know that *Athens* was one of the ancient Seats of Learning, with which we are beſt acquainted; and perhaps, of all the ancient ones, the

the moſt renowned for Arts, and public Speaking. The Citizens of this noted *Republic* were an ingenious, quick-witted, ſprightly People, practiſed in Buſineſs, and ſharpened by frequent and ſudden Revolutions which happened in their Government. The Genius of it was moſtly *Democratical:* the Legiſlature conſiſted rather of the collective Body of the People, than of a ſelect Repreſentative; and Affairs were managed there principally by Speaking, Briguing, and an artful Application to the Paſſions or Intereſts of a popular Aſſembly. There, Laws were propoſed and enacted, Peace and War decreed, and from thence Magiſtrates were choſen. For the higheſt Honours in the State were alike open to all; nor was the meaneſt Tradeſman excluded from a Seat in the moſt auguſt Court of the Nation. Here then was abundant Encouragement and Play to the Wit and Talents, both natural and acquired, of this ſenſible People. If we add to this Conſideration, the univerſal Commerce they had with their Neighbours, and with Strangers from every Quarter; the free Intercourſe of all Ranks, with one another; the early Introduction, and quick Progreſs of the Arts among them; the ſtrong Tincture of Superſtition, which gave a deep Colour to their Manners, and added to the Volubility of their Tongues, as well as made their City the great Mart of religious Myſteries; together with the fine Air and Situation,

tion, which gave a peculiar Edge and Quickneſs to their Spirits; we need not wonder, that the Turn of private Converſation, and the Practice of public Speaking, were carried to high Degrees of Refinement. Accordingly, this rich and fertile Soil produced a Crop of Orators of every Species, who excelled in all the different Kinds of Speaking, the familiar, the elegant, the pathetic, the ſublime. But what ſeems to have principally prevailed, and to have been in the higheſt Vogue, was a round, eaſy, natural, and withal a conciſe way of Speaking, ſuch as touched the main Point in queſtion, and convinced the Judgment, no leſs than it moved the Paſſions. It muſt be acknowledged, indeed, that ambitious Demagogues and corrupt Orators, in order to ſerve their own private Views, did often dazzle, and ſometimes miſlead, the People by a ſhewy, but falſe Eloquence, by playing upon their Credulity, ſoothing their Vanity, or gratifying ſome preſent Guſt of Paſſion. But when any great Danger rouſed them from their Lethargy, or when ſome important Intereſt drew their Attention, and ſet them a thinking, that temporary Enchantment vaniſhed: they made a juſt Diſtinction between the *genuine* and the *ſpurious* Orator, and ſhewed the Accuteneſs of their Senſe, by the Wiſdom of their Determinations. For we are aſſured by one who knew them well, the candid XENOPHON, who was no Friend to the

Commons,

Commons, that they generally conſulted the public Intereſt. Thus we find, that the trueſt Orator among them, DEMOSTHENES I mean, was always the moſt triumphant. Why? Becauſe he ſpoke to the Purpoſe, uſed no unneceſſary Circumlocutions, affected no inſignificant Parade of Eloquence, employed no Figures but what were expreſſive and proper, no Arguments but what were cogent and weighty: ſhewed clearly where their Intereſt lay, and pathetically enforced thoſe Meaſures that were requiſite to obtain or ſecure it. The mere Play of Words, the injudicious Oſtentation of Wit, or empty Pomp of Declamation, would, in any critical Conjuncture, have been *hiſſed or laughed* at by an Audience, ſo intelligent and practiſed in Affairs; who made their greateſt Orators tremble at ſuch Times, and ſummon up their whole Force of Head and Tongue, when they undertook to harangue to them. Among a People ſo enlightened, vivacious, and full of Spirits, Action, and all the exterior Apparatus of Oratory, were carried to the higheſt Pitch; as we may gueſs from the vaſtly ſuperior Force aſcribed to Harangues when enlivened with all the Warmth, and embelliſhed with all the Graces of Elocution, above thoſe when read only. There the *Suppoſis Pedum*, the *Porrectio* and *Contractio Manuum*, the various and ſignificant Expreſſion of the Face, were all empoyed with the utmoſt Sagacity: the

the Fancy of the Hearers was charmed by all the Power of Imagery, yet rendered ſubſervient to the cooler Dictates of Reaſon: their Paſſions were aſſaulted ſometimes by open Storm and Battery, but oftener indirectly and by Sap: their Senſes of Seeing and Hearing were filled and ſatisfied with all the Decency of Action and Harmony of Sound; and the whole Compoſition was animated with a Soul which a Senſe of Common-weal could alone inſpire, and which Liberty and equal Laws could alone ſuſtain. Even after that Senſe expired, and when that Liberty and thoſe Laws were no more, the external Form and elegant Propriety of Speaking ſtill ſubſiſted: and it was in the School of *Athens* that the Orators of *Rome* ſtudied the moſt approved Models, and ſought, by grafting *Attic* Elegance on *Roman* Spirit, to rival the almoſt inimitable Productions of a PERICLES, or a DEMOSTHENES. And we find, that when the eloquent *Apoſtle* of the *Gentiles* addreſſed himſelf to a mixed Aſſembly of the *Athenians*, though he artfully touched the popular Superſtition, yet he uſes no Flouriſhes of Rhetoric, no Affectation of Wit, nor Parade of vain Philoſophy, but ſpeaks to the Reaſon, rather than to the Paſſions of his Audience. *Such* then was the *Athenian* Style or Genius of Speaking; which was, no doubt, more or leſs rude or poliſhed, according to the gradual Refinement of their Taſte and Manners;

Manners; and more or leſs free and pathetic, or ſervile and fawning, according to the different Changes which their Government underwent; but which ſtill preſerved, amidſt thoſe leſſer Diverſities, the characteriſtical Simplicity, Roundneſs, and Vivacity, that diſtinguiſhed the *Attic* Eloquence.

I do not doubt, ſaid I, but you have done Juſtice to the *Athenian Manner*; and indeed I cannot help thinking it ſuitable to the Standard of Nature, and peculiarly adapted to the Turn of ſuch a ſhrewd and ſenſible People. I ſhall be glad to hear your Opinion next of the *Roman* Eloquence.

As to it, I cannot ſo thoroughly ſatisfy myſelf, ſaid AGORETES. In general, I take the Paſſions as well as the Underſtandings of the *Roman* People to have been upon a lower Key than thoſe of the *Athenians*. Their martial Genius, their conſtant Engagements in War, and their Ignorance of Commerce, gave them a more grave, rough, and ſullen Caſt, and hardly admitted thoſe Refinements in Arts and Eloquence, which were peculiar to the ingenious *Greeks*. Indeed, the Form of their Government, which was ſomething between the *Ariſtocratical* and the *Popular*, the mighty Conteſts which aroſe between the Nobles and the Commons, and the

ſingular

ſingular Advantage which Eloquence gave the leading Men in their public Aſſemblies, made Speaking be ſoon ſtudied as an Art, a powerful Engine of Government, and a neceſſary Step to Preferment. But the *Romans* were a cold, ſaturnine and phlegmatic People, and therefore neither entered ſo quickly into the Force of an Argument, nor were their Paſſions ſo eaſily moved as thoſe of an *Athenian* Audience. Half a Sentence, a ſingle Hint was ſufficient to make *Them* ſee the Drift of an Orator; and if he became wordy, went out of his way in queſt of Ornament, or loaded their Ears with unneceſſary Illuſtrations, they were ready to correct his Froth, and bring him back to the Point in debate. But a *Roman* Ear, being leſs ſenſible, and more accuſtomed to the Din of War, required more Circumlocutions, more Ornament and Preparation, to draw its Attention: the Underſtanding needed a greater Compaſs of Sentiments and of Style, to open its Perceptions; and the Paſſions were to be rouſed by bolder Figures, a more boiſterous Addreſs, and a more animated Action. Thus we find, that the Voice of a GRACCHUS grew ſo outrageous, through the vehement Pathos with which he ſpoke, that it muſt be taken down from its exceſſive Flights, by the ſofter Modulations of a Pipe, which his Prompter uſed at his Back. The ſtriking the Forehead and the Thigh, were ordinary Expreſſions

ſions of ſtrong Emotions of Mind. And we may eaſily believe, that Action was greatly ſtudied, when we find the judicious Teacher of *Roman* Eloquence, entering into ſo minute a Detail of every Part of it, and even condeſcending ſo far as to regulate the Motion of every Finger. The *Popular* Orations of CICERO, though filled with the nobleſt Strains of Eloquence, are yet generally diffuſe and declamatory, ſometimes puerile, and often florid. There you ſee ſometimes an injudicious Affectation of Wit, quaint Antitheſes, the Play of Words, far fetched Metaphors and Figures, Language ſwelling even to Fuſtian, and often more Attention to Ornament than to Truth, and a greater Concern to ſet off the *Orator* than the *Cauſe*. We may readily ſuppoſe, that if ſo great and eſteemed a Model fell into ſuch a Manner, he would not want Imitators in a State, where the public Taſte was not yet thoroughly ſettled. Perhaps indeed the Genius of the People made it more neceſſary than we are at preſent aware of; and therefore, unleſs we were better acquainted with them, it may be too haſty to paſs a deciſive Sentence againſt the Judgment and Addreſs of ſo good a Judge, and ſo able a Performer. Though after all, we may make the freer with him, as he has, with ſuch Eaſe and Dignity, uſed the firſt Liberty with himſelf. In his Time, and the Age which ſucceeded, the Correctneſs of the *Athenian* Manner came, how-

ever, more into vogue: mere Declamation, and the tinſel Trappings of Diſcourſe were generally avoided, and became a favourite Topic of Ridicule to the poliſhed Wits of the *Auguſtan* Age. But things having now reached their Prime, declined faſt: Liberty, the Soul of *Roman* Eloquence, was extinguiſhed: the ſtudied Periods of Flattery, and the empty Pomp of falſe Oratory, took place: Men durſt not ſpeak, and hardly think, with Freedom: Philoſophers wrote, Senators harangued, and Courtiers ſpoke, according to the Nod of a Maſter, and ecchoed only to *his* Sentiments and Pleaſure. So that *Eloquence*, and moſt of the fine Arts withdrew, or *hid their diminiſhed Heads*, and left behind them a deep and univerſal Gloom.

I doubt not, ſaid I, but the Deſtruction of the free Government, and the general Servility of Spirit and Manners which ſucceeded, muſt have greatly forwarded the Degeneracy of Eloquence and Arts in the *Roman* Empire. But as the Dawn of *Goſpel-Light* broke forth about this Time, and the *Apoſtles* and Followers of our *Saviour* began to propagate *Chriſtianity* through this extenſive Empire; do you not think, that, ſince they derived the *Manner*, as well as *Materials*, of their Preaching, from the great Fountain of Truth, and ſupreme Model of Eloquence, they

they muſt have approached the neareſt to that juſt Standard, which we are ſeeking after?

I believe the *Apoſtolic* Manner, ſaid AGORETES, is a noble Pattern for modern Preachers in many and important Reſpects. But to copy it too cloſe, without making proper Allowances for the Difference of *their* Character, and that of the *Apoſtles*, and of the Manners of that Age, and this in which we live, might perhaps lead the forward Imitators into ſeveral Miſtakes. Thoſe *Apoſtolic* Inſtructors were formed upon the *Eaſtern* Taſte and Manner. The *Jews*, and in general the People of thoſe *Eaſtern* Countries, were naturally of a warm Imagination: their Perceptions were acute, and their Paſſions violent: they ſpoke little, and thought much; and what they ſpoke was generally with great Parade and many Circumlocutions: when prompted by vehement Emotions, or inſpired by the ſudden Sallies of an heated Fancy, they broke out into ſtrong Metaphors, bold Figures, daring Images, and a Diction often extravagant, and always pompous. We may believe, that their *Manner* would be of a piece, full of Heat and Action, intenſe and animated far beyond the Ordinary of Countries, where the Fancy and Feelings of the Inhabitants were upon a lower Key. Their Voice was raiſed the higher, that it was ſeldom exerciſed; and all their Geſtures

were naturally violent, as being expreſſive of thoſe internal Throws which agitated their Minds. Thus we find their *Prophets*, who were profeſſed Preachers among them, ſometimes delivering their heavenly Meſſages by ſignificant Actions or Symbols, ſmiting upon their Thigh, throwing themſelves proſtrate on their Faces, covering thier Heads with Sackcloth and with Aſhes, and the like Expreſſions of Grief, Indignation, Repentance, *&c.* The highly figurative Religion of the *Jews*, the frequent Revolutions their Government underwent, the ſeveral national Misfortunes they ſuffered, the high Opinion they entertained of themſelves, as *the peculiar People*, and of their Country, as the *Seat of Miracles*, the *Land of Prophecy*, and the *choſen Inheritance* of GOD, all contributed to inflame their Imaginations, and to give a deeper Hue and more metaphoric Tincture, if I may ſo ſpeak, to their Language. Accordingly we ſee, that the *Epiſtolary* Writings of the *Apoſtles*, which we may ſuppoſe came the neareſt to their Manner of Preaching, are full of Metaphors, Amplifications, Characterizing and Change of Perſons, Circumlocutions, Parentheſes, Allegories, and frequent Alluſions to the *Hebrew* Polity, Ceremonies, Hiſtory, and Cuſtoms. Such Strains of Writing and Preaching, were adapted to the Genius, and level to the Underſtandings of *thoſe* to whom they were addreſſed: but to *us* they appear

appear ſtiff, as it were, often obſcure, and ſometimes unintelligible; and, were they to be drawn too cloſely into Imitation, would be thought unnatural and extravagant, and be in fact incomprehenſible to a modern Audience, of a Taſte and Manners ſo widely different, as ours generally are.

The Dignity of the *Apoſtolic* Character, the ſupernatural Gifts of which thoſe divine Men were poſſeſſed, and the ſublime Nature of their Commiſſion, derived immediately from *Heaven*, did likewiſe entitle them to aſſume a Freedom in judging, a Severity in rebuking, an Authority in commanding, and a Majeſty in their whole manner of Addreſs, which the confeſt Inferiority of the Character of a modern Preacher will by no means permit him to emulate, without expoſing both the Preacher, and his Preaching, to juſt Contempt. Yet, after all, there is often found in the *Apoſtolic* Manner, a Sublimity of Sentiment, a Pomp of Deſcription, a Clearneſs, Strength, and Brevity of Precept, a Cloſeneſs of Appeal, a Force and Abruptneſs of Interrogation, a Simplicity of Words, and Pathos of Addreſs, that are admirable in themſelves, and worthy the Imitation of every Preacher.

The immediate Followers of our *Saviour* and his *Apoſtles*, we may believe imbibed their Spirit,

and imitated their Manner. They were generally Men of mean Birth and low Station; and as their natural Parts were not improved by a polite or learned Education, their Authority and Succeſs in Preaching did not depend on their Capacity, or Skill in the Arts of Oratory, but on the Simplicity of their Manners, the ſingular Sanctity of their Life and Character, and the Importance and Credibility of the Teſtimony they bore to the great Facts and Doctrines of *Chriſtianity*, which had been all along ſupported by ſuch irreſiſtible Evidence. It pleaſed *Heaven* to employ theſe apparently weak Tools, in carrying on its great Deſigns, and to ſend forth thoſe plain Men to erect, in Oppoſition to the inveterate Prejudices and ſenſual Paſſions of the World, the Croſs of *a deſpiſed Saviour*, to erect it upon the Ruins of the eſtabliſhed Religion, and its admired Mythology. Accordingly their artleſs Preaching and indefatigable Labours were made ſucceſsful in removing thoſe Prejudices, ſubduing thoſe Paſſions, and ſpreading the Kingdom of the *Meſſias*.

But in proportion as *Chriſtianity* took Root, extended its Branches, and came to be ſupported by the *civil* Powers, the public Teachers of it did ſoon and greatly degenerate from the glorious Pattern of their Predeceſſors, bended the Rigour of their Maxims to the growing Luxury of the Age,

Age, and affected to pleaſe the popular Taſte, by a new and more palatable Species of Addreſs. The *polite Arts*, and, among the reſt, that of Speaking, I obſerved before were *then* greatly corrupted; and this Corruption, as muſt naturally happen, reached both the Bar and Pulpit. People were grown fond of the *florid* Manner in every thing: the gaudy and declamatory Style became faſhionable: far-fetched Similies, forced Antitheſes, laboured Conceits, rounded Periods, and allegorical Expoſitions of Scripture, were much in vogue. Some learned *Fathers*, who were late Proſelytes from the School of PLATO to that of JESUS, and who imagined ſome of the *literal* Senſes of Scripture inconſiſtent, or not ſo well reconcileable, with thoſe Principles of Philoſophy, which they had early imbibed, explained theſe away, and had recourſe to *myſtical* ones. Others, from a well-meant but indiſcreet Zeal for the *Spirit*, abandoned the Drineſs of the *Letter*, and, in order to edify their Hearers, converted many Parts of the ſacred Story into abſtruſe, ſpiritual, and moral Allegories. Thus, for inſtance, with what Art and Subtilty does AMBROSE explain away PETER's Denial of his Maſter, and how ungrammatically does he torture and allegorize the Words, to ſupport his own unnatural Hypotheſis? With what a jejune Violence does he apply the Perſons in the Song of SOLOMON, one to the Body, the other to the

Soul of the dead Emperor VALENTINIAN, in his funeral Oration for him. With what Impropriety does JEROM level JEREMIAH's prophetical Reproofs of the *Jews*, for their Superſtition and Idolatry, againſt a *Chriſtian* Widow, for a ſecond Marriage? How wildly does JUSTIN MARTYR talk, in diſcourſing on the Myſtery of the Croſs, which he calls the greateſt Symbol of Dominion and Power; without the Form of which he affirms that human Affairs could not be tranſacted, and to which he applies all the Sticks and Pieces of Wood, mentioned in the *Old Teſtament*. How puerile is IRENÆUS, in carrying on the Analogy between the *clean* and *unclean* Beaſts, and Men; comparing the *former*, who divide the Hoof, and chew the Cud, to thoſe that believe in the Father and in the Son, and that meditate on the Law; and the *latter* to thoſe that do neither? How idle does CLEMENS alledge the *Phenix* as a Type and Proof of the Reſurrection? Into what a trifling Play of Words does AUSTIN, notwithſtanding all his Eloquence, fall on a thouſand Occaſions? How luxuriant is even the learned ORIGEN in his *allegorical* Senſes, by which he wanted to enrich and diverſify the *literal*, to refine and exalt the ſimple Facts, and by ſo doing, to convey ſome important Truth, or to enforce ſome uſeful Precept? However other *Fathers*, eſpecially the *Greek*, (for in the *Eaſt* the juſt Manner of Speaking and Writing,

Writing, continued longer than in the *Weſt*) ſhewed better Judgment, and a truer Taſte, ſtudied a more plain and natural Turn of Preaching, and ſought to convince by ſound Reaſoning, and to move by the proper Arts of Perſuaſion. Among theſe, CHRYSOSTOM and BASIL ſhone out as the beſt and moſt eloquent Models. Theſe rejected the vain Flouriſhes, and dry Stiffneſs of Art, and followed more the Simplicity of Nature. They were content to explain the Scriptures according to their literal and grammatical Senſe; they reaſoned the Point, of which they wanted to convince their Audience, with Cloſeneſs and Strength of Argument, painted things to their very Imaginations, in their moſt natural and ſtriking Circumſtances, and performed all this with ſuch Clearneſs and Beauty of Language, as at once inſtructed, edified, and warmed the People. "The Style of St. CHRY-"SOSTOM," ſays a fine Judge, "is diffuſe; "but he ſpeaks no falſe Ornaments: all tends "to Perſuaſion: he places every thing with "Deſign: he is well acquainted with Scripture, "and the Manners of Men: he inſinuates him-"ſelf into the Heart, gives a *Relief* and Colour-"ing to every thing, has noble Thoughts, and "is not void of Paſſion. St. BASIL," ſays the ſame Critic, "is grave, ſententious, and auſtere, "even in his Diction. He thoroughly under-"ſtood the *Goſpel-Scheme*, and the Diſeaſes of

" Man, and is a great Maſter in the Cure and " Regimen of Souls."

Afterwards, in proportion as the Church grew more corrupted, the Manner of Preaching partook of the common Contagion, and ſunk into Superſtition and Futility in the Explanation of the Doctrines of *Chriſtianity*, or ſwelled into Fuſtian and falſe Rhetoric in recommending its Morals. True Faith was involved in Fable, Myſticiſm, and wild Chimera: true Piety was buried under a Load of childiſh and ſuperſtitious Practices; and true Virtue was loſt amidſt that Ambition and Luxury, which prompted ſome to be the Deluders and Tyrants, and that Ignorance and Senſuality, which prepared others to be the Dupes and Slaves, of their Fellow-creatures.

I do not doubt, ſaid I, but the Detail you have gone through is ſufficiently juſt; as the unfortunate Situation of the Times, before and after the Declenſion of the *Roman* Empire, and the Manners of thoſe barbarous Ages, muſt have proportionably corrupted the general Vein of Speaking and of Writing. But did not the Revival of Learning bring things back to their ancient Purity, and particularly give a new Form and Spirit to Eloquence, Poetry, and the other Siſter-Arts?

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The inveterate Ruſt, ſaid AGORETES, which *Gothic* Ignorance and Barbarity had ſpread over Men and Things, made all Improvements of that kind totally impracticable, whilſt it continued, and very difficult, when it began to wear off. The *Monks*, and other Prieſts, generally formed themſelves upon the worſt Models they found among the *Fathers*, and indulged to Allegory with the utmoſt Wantonneſs of Fancy. Indeed, as the Taſte for *Grecian* and *Roman* Learning increaſed, Men of Letters began to reliſh a more chaſte Manner in Compoſition: CICERO became the great Model of thoſe who piqued themſelves on a polite Strain; and to depart from that eſtabliſhed Standard, was deemed almoſt Hereſy by theſe *Ciceronian* Admirers. But after all, the groſs Corruptions of the public Religion, in *Roman Catholic* Countries, continued, and I doubt ſtill continue, a dead Weight on the Generality of its Preachers, and prevent the Eloquence of the Pulpit from riſing to that Perfection, which the Progreſs of other Arts among them might give one Reaſon to expect. It muſt, indeed, be allowed that, with regard to the exterior Parts of Eloquence, they equal perhaps, if not excel, the moſt finiſhed Pulpit-Orators of their *Proteſtant* Brethren. Thoſe they ſtudy with unwearied Aſſiduity: they have profeſſed Teachers among them, who with infinite

Sagacity

Sagacity and Induſtry teach the beſt Rules of Speaking, Pronouncing, and Acting, and point out to them the beſt Models in all theſe. At the ſame time, the particular Genius, Diſpoſitions, and Climate of thoſe Countries, do naturally infuſe into their Manner, and of courſe authorize, a Sprightlineſs and Agility, which is unfelt, or if felt, would hardly be allowed of, in colder and more *Northern* Countries.

The *French* are a lively, loquacious, and witty People: Accordingly, we find their Preachers wonderfully warm, diffuſe, full of Action in the Pulpit, as in Converſation; fanciful and picturesque in their Deſcriptions, and rather elegant and wordy, than deeply ſtrong in their Converſations. The *Italians*, who are of a more ſevere, cautious, and reſerved Caſt in their Temper and Converſation, ſhew a proportionable Difference in their Manner of Speaking and Preaching. Their Preachers are ſubtil, acute, and refined, of a leſs vivacious, yet more commanding Action than the *French:* Full of Spirit and Paſſion, yet more ſmooth and artful in managing them. Though this may be generally true of the common Rule, yet both Nations have given us good Models of ſtrong Reaſoning and maſterly Eloquence, equally accommodated to pleaſe the moſt refined Taſte, and to affect the moſt Vulgar. The *Spaniſh* Manner, like that of the

Nation, is more ſolemn, ſtately, and full of Figures formed for Oſtentation, and proudly ſwelling with all the Pomp of Rhetoric. Their Genius is piercing, and ſublime; and though, perhaps, as full of Fire as any of their Neighbours, yet more chaſtened by the Stiffneſs and Haughtineſs of their Manners. If I durſt, in like manner, hazard a Criticiſm upon the *Engliſh* Method of Preaching, I ſhould ſay, it had its Peculiarity, adapted to the Genius of the People. This I take to be leſs loquacious than the *French*, leſs reſerved than the *Italian*, more phlegmatic and ſaturnine than both. As they are generally open and candid themſelves, they diſlike the Appearance of Art in others, eſpecially in thoſe who addreſs them. Their Paſſions reſemble their Climate, being generally cold and inconſtant: but their Opulence, and the Freedom of their Government, make them bolder and leſs cautious in expreſſing them. They are thoughtful, grave, and much ſubject to the Spleen and Vapours, to ſudden Flows of Good-humour, and frequent Fits of bad.

Now, though the general Turn of Preaching among them reſembles their national Complexion, and is moſtly in a cool diſpaſſionate Key; yet has it always taken a Tincture from the particular Character of the different Ages, and the periodical Conſtitutions, if I may ſo ſay, of the Nation;

Nation; as they have been more or leſs refined, calm or turbulent, ſober or luxurious.——But to trace theſe nicer Differences, would, I am afraid, lead us into too great a Detail, and require a deeper and more extenſive Knowledge of the Times than I can pretend to.

I ſhould be glad, however, ſaid I, to hear your Opinion, in general, of the more obſervable Revolutions, that have happened in the Method of Preaching in our Country, ſince the *Reformation*. For I am perſuaded, you have often thought of the Subject; whereas it is quite new to me.

I acknowledge, ſaid AGORETES, I have ſometimes conſidered thoſe Changes, and have imagined I could obſerve a real Diverſity in their ſeveral Manners, which have prevailed: But it is only a few of the moſt Obvious, which I dare venture to gueſs at, rather than undertake to aſcertain.

Soon after the *Reformation*, when the two Nations fell under one Head, the firſt Appearance that Preaching made, was in the pompous, metaphorical Dreſs. Our learned King brought Learning into vogue; and to quote *Greek* and *Latin* Authors, even in common Converſation, was faſhionable and courtly. His ſacred Majeſty

deigned to inſtruct as well as to govern his People. His obſequious and docile Pupils, both Clergy and Laity, vied with each other, who ſhould imbibe faſteſt the liberal Stream, and admire moſt implicitly the awful Dictates of their *anointed* Tutor. The whole Learning of the Age, was ſhaped after the royal Model, dark, ſcholaſtic, and controverſial; except what Lord BACON, by the force of a ſuperiour Genius, ventured to ſtrike out. The Style of Preaching was declamatory and figurative, pointed with Puns and Antitheſes, and larded with *Greek* and *Latin* Quotations. The Preachers made a Parade of comparing different *Verſions*, and tracing the *Originals*; diſtributed the Text into cold and dry Diviſions, adorned their Compoſitions with Quibbles, and the ſilly Jingle of Words, becoming School-Boys rather than Men and Scholars; and often perverted them from their proper Deſign, to inculcate the Principles of Slavery and arbitrary Power, and to ſubſerve their own ſordid and ambitious Purpoſes.

In the next Period, things took a different Turn. The Paſſions of Men were wonderfully inflamed, by the Attempts which were made, to introduce arbitrary Government. The Convulſions, Viciſſitudes, and various Calamities of a civil War, rouſed the Spirits of the contending Parties, which had been damped or kept down

down by the preceding Tyranny; filled them with Fears and Hopes, and hurried them from one Extreme to another. In ſuch a Situation, the Spirit of Enthuſiaſm is moſt apt to invade the human Mind, and to break out into Raptures or Panics. And as a perfect Freedom in Religion ſucceeded to the Severity of eccleſiaſtic Tyranny, the religious Paſſions burſt out with a Violence proportioned to the Reſtraints they had formerly lain under. Therefore the Genius of Preaching reſembled that of the Age, and run into an high, pathetic, and enthuſiaſtic Vein. A devotional Spirit was the general Faſhion, which every one was obliged to be in, or elſe to make up by the Fairneſs of the Maſk, for the Want of Reality. In ſuch Circumſtances, Men were apt to be miſled by every ignorant or impudent Pretender, to extraordinary Degrees of Zeal and Sanctity. And as it was the Intereſt of the different Leaders, to have it commonly believed, that *Heaven* had lifted itſelf of *their* Party; ſo the Faith of particular divine Interpoſitions in their Favour, was eaſily propagated, and greedily ſwallowed by both Sides. If we add to this, that where Mens Hopes or Fears are much raiſed by the Greatneſs of the Venture, and the Uncertainty of the Iſſue, they are exceedingly prone to ſeek Aſſiſtance, and to expect Relief, from *Heaven*: I ſay, putting all this together, it is no wonder that a prodigious Spawn

of

of Enthuſiaſts and Sectaries appeared, whoſe Minds were like Tinder, ready to take Fire with every Spark, and to kindle into the moſt furious Combuſtions. Therefore the Diſpoſitions of Preachers and People, were reciprocally inflaming, and inflamed by each other. The Tone of Preaching was agitated and various, as were the Paſſions of the Hearers. It glowed with uncommon Fervours, ſudden Lights, and ſupernatural Impulſes, or ſtrong Pretences to them, and with a mighty Zeal for Purity and Reformation, whether real or affected. No doubt, there was much Seriouſneſs and undiſſembled Ardour, an higher Spirit of Devotion, a warmer Senſe of divine Things, and ſtronger Affections to a public Intereſt, than have appeared before or ſince that Period. Where theſe took place, the Aſſiſtance of Learning and human Art was often deſpiſed as unneceſſary, or dreaded as derogatory to higher *Gifts*: And the ſober Chaſtenings of Judgment gave way to unnatural Flights, turgid Conceits, a pompous Style, and ungoverned Action. But where they were wanting, the indiſcreet Votaries endeavoured to ſupply their Room by affected Raptures, unmeaning Cant, wild Grimace, and all the Diſtortions of Enthuſiaſm, blended with Superſtition.

I do not at all wonder, ſaid I, when the Imaginations and Paſſions of Men were ſo much inflamed

flamed by the important Events of ſuch a giddy, tumultuous, and diverſified Scene, that they ran into Extremes, and bore about them ſo many Symptoms of enthuſiaſtic Frenzy. And, doubtleſs, the Manner of Preaching then in vogue, muſt have been of the marvellous and pathetic Strain: But then I am apt to believe, that it ſtill retained a good deal of the Pedantry of the preceding Age; and though ſome of the enlightened Teachers might undervalue human Aids in their Compoſitions, yet others of them, eſpecially ſuch as filled the *Seats of Learning*, made uſe likewiſe of their literary Accompliſhments, and ſtuffed their Sermons as well as other Writings, with numerous Scraps of *Latin*, much polemic Brawl, and a ſublime kind of Fuſtian, rather than a manly and moving Eloquence. But I beg you will go on with your Hiſtory.

In this I agree with you, ſaid AGORETES. Many of the religious Leaders among the Sectaries were Men of conſiderable Learning, and Abilities; and in many of their Writings we diſcover a noble unaffected Piety, a ſingular Elevation of Thought, a great Compaſs of Knowledge, and much Variety and Strength of Style. But Eloquence had not then attained its true Standard: it was over-laid, rather than adorned, by the Learning which prevailed: their Compoſitions were irregular and incorrect, and their Diction

Diction either ſwoln and figurative, or intricate and dry.

The next Age had the Merit of refining much upon the Manner of their Predeceſſors. The Return of Peace, and its ordinary Attendants, Security and Wealth, gave People leiſure to cultivate all the Arts and Sciences which tend to the Improvement, or Ornament of Life. It is true, that the Enthuſiaſm and Hypocriſy of the former Age, were ſucceeded by Luxury, Diſſoluteneſs of Manners, and a wanton Contempt of Religion: nor were there wanting ſome mercenary and ambitious Divines, who winked at the Vices of the Court, and ſought to recommend themſelves, by proſtituting the Dignity of their Character and Profeſſion, to defend or palliate the moſt deſpotic Meaſures, and to preach up the Principles of Slavery and implicit Submiſſion to Power. Yet that noble Spirit of Freedom, which had been begotten under the Inclemencies of civil and eccleſiaſtical Incroachments, and was nurſed, and had grown up, in the glorious Struggle for Liberty and equal Government, could not be deſtroyed, by the renewed Attempts that were made againſt both; but daily increaſed, and appeared in a general free Inquiry, and in the Vigour and Boldneſs of public Debates, and of private Converſation. The Nature and Foundations of Religion and Government were

examined

examined with Freedom and Candour by ſome, with Severity, and even with Malice by others. The Dangers ariſing from *Popery* on one hand, and from Deſigns againſt the *Conſtitution* on the other, gave a Check to the general Joy, opened the Eyes of the more ſober and thoughtful Part, and raiſed a juſt Attention to the common Intereſt. Accordingly, as many able *Patriots* aroſe to guard us againſt the *latter*, ſo many eminent *Divines* ſprung up to protect us againſt the *former*. Theſe great Men nobly and boldly exploded the Principles of implicit Faith; inquired, in a rational and unprejudiced manner, into the Nature and Grounds of true Religion; expoſed, with proper Spirit, the Horrors of eccleſiaſtic Tyranny, and by ſo doing ſapped the very Foundations of *Popery*. They had formed themſelves upon the beſt Models of *Antiquity*, and had imbibed the Genius and Sentiments of the divine *Moraliſts*. The Effects of this appear in their Compoſitions, which breathe a modeſt but generous Freedom, a ſublime and enlightened Piety, an exalted Taſte of Morals, ſuch a Spirit of Moderation, and ſo pure a Flame of univerſal Benevolence, as is moſt adapted to win the Eſteem, and reconcile the Hearts of Mankind. Theſe Preachers rubbed off the Ruſt, and refined the Manner of Preaching. Inſtead of a tedious Explication of the Text, and giving the Concordance of every Word in it, as had been the way formerly;

formerly; they plainly and briefly opened its Connexion and Meaning, and then ſtated the Propoſitions ariſing out of it, in their Nature, Truth, and Reaſonableneſs. Inſtead of diſcuſſing ſome nice and barren Points of Controverſy, in a ſcholaſtic manner, they painted the Beauty and Advantages of ſubſtantial Virtue, with great Strength of Reaſon, and Perſpicuity of Style: and inſtead of concluding their Diſcourſes coldly, with a few ſhort *Inferences* or *Uſes*, as they were called, they wound them up with a pathetic and manly Addreſs, in which they applied the whole to the Conſciences and Lives of their Hearers. Whereas the Strain of former Sermons was either flat or low, being wire-drawn with controverſial Diſputes, and having the Senſe ſcattered by ſuch ſpurious Mixtures as did not enter into the Body of the Work, but rather ſtuck out like ſo many Excreſcences; or elſe the Style ſwelled into a ridiculous kind of Bombaſt, and ſometimes an unintelligible Jargon; the Compoſitions of this new Race of Preachers, were more according to the genuine Simplicity and Beauty of Nature. Their Diction was eaſy, clear, and nervous, pregnant with Sentiment, adorned with apt Metaphors, and ſplendid Figures, and thoſe not far-fetched, or high-ſtrained, but ſuch as grew out of the Subjects, and were the moſt proper to enlighten and affect the Auditory. They cut off all unneceſſary Shews of Learning, applied cloſe

to

to the Matter in hand, and purſued, throughout, ſome weighty and important Point, without enervating the Diſcourſe by uſeleſs Digreſſions, or crumbling it down into minute Diviſions. In ſhort, they vindicated our Faith upon the Principles of ſound Reaſon; ſhewed the Connexion between natural and revealed Religion, with all the Strength of Evidence; diſplayed the Excellence of both, with regard to private and public Happineſs, in the moſt engaging Light; and painted genuine *Chriſtianity* with that venerable Air, and maſculine Beauty, which diſtinguiſhes her alike from mean Superſtition and rank Enthuſiaſm, and inſtead of inſpiring with Contempt and Dread, commands Love and Admiration.——This, my Friend, I take to be the Period, in which the Art of Preaching was carried, though not to Perfection, yet to the higheſt Pitch of Beauty it had before, or has ever ſince attained.

What, AGORETES, ſaid I, with ſome Surprize, do you not think, that the Art has received conſiderable Improvements, ſince that time; eſpecially as our Language is grown more refined and copious, and moſt Branches of Learning have been enlarged, by the continual Labours of a curious and inquiſitive Age?

I hardly think, reſumed AGORETES, that our Improvements in the Art of Preaching, have kept pace with our other Refinements in Knowledge. I fear, it has rather, for ſome time paſt, been at a ſtand among us. I admit, indeed, that the Foundations of our holy Religion are perhaps better underſtood, by the freer Diſcuſſion of Friends, as well as Enemies; that leſs Regard is paid to the Authority of Creeds and Syſtems, than formerly; and more of the falſe Daubing removed, which ſometimes deformed the Beauty of true Religion; and that the Spirit of Toleration is more widely diffuſed among the ſeveral Denominations of Men. But I fear, I ſadly fear, PHILONOUS, that the vital Spirit of Devotion, which animated former Preachers, and thoſe ſublime Feelings of Virtue, which ennobled their Compoſitions, are much decayed. Our Teachers now a-days, ſeem generally more concerned to ſet forth themſelves, than the Doctrines and Laws of their great Maſter; and to give a Grace, a Roundneſs, and an Air of Novelty, to their Performances, than to fill them with a deep Savour of Religion, or enliven them with the Warmth and Energy of Virtue. In ſhort, from the Strain of their Sermons, I have been ſometimes tempted to think, that many of them aimed more at Reputation and Preferment, than

than at converting Souls to the Love of God, and the Practice of Goodneſs.

But will you not allow, ſaid I, that the Sermons of the preſent Age are much more correct and refined, than thoſe of the laſt; that they are equally diſtant from the turgid Rant, and learned Pedantry of ſome, and the diſputatious Drineſs, and falſe Wit of others; that there is great Variety and Copiouſneſs of Matter in them, and Nobleneſs, or where that is wanting, Prettineſs of Sentiment; that the Preachers handle an Argument with much Solidity of Judgment, and combat the Adverſaries of our Faith with much Poignancy of Raillery? If they are not ſo pathetic as you ſeem to wiſh, the Reaſon may poſſibly be, becauſe they chuſe rather to work upon the Underſtandings of their Hearers, by the pure Force of Conviction, than to play upon their Paſſions, by the puerile and tranſitory Arts of Oratory; as believing, that the only way of intereſting and gaining the *Heart*, is by bringing the *Judgment* to be of a Party with it.

I am conſcious to myſelf of no Prejudices againſt our modern Preachers, ſaid AGORETES, and am very willing to allow them all the Merit that you or their warmeſt Advocates can plead for. I allow them generally a noble Superiority to popular Errors, great Freedom and Beauty of Sentiment,

Sentiment, clear Reaſoning and Coherence of Thought, deep critical Skill, Elegance of Style, a juſt Arrangement of Periods, Propriety of Pronunciation, and much Modeſty in their Action and Manner. But after all, I have ſo unhappy a Taſte, or ſo unfaſhionable a way of Thinking, as not to be thoroughly ſatisfied even with all theſe combined Excellencies. I want, my dear Friend, to have my Mind exalted above the World, and above itſelf, with the Sacredneſs and Sublimity of divine Things: I want to feel, warmly to feel, no leſs than to be cooly convinced of, the tranſcendent Beauty, and Excellence of Virtue: I want to be ſuſpended, and awed, as with the Preſence of GOD, to ſink into deep Proſtration before Him, to be ſtruck with the Majeſty of his Perfections, and tranſported with the Wonders of his Love: I want to conceive an infinite Horror at Sin, to glow with an ardent Paſſion for doing good, to pant after Perfection and Immortality, and to ripen apace for both: In ſhort, I want to have my Underſtanding enlightened, my Heart enflamed, every Affection thrilled, and my whole Life reformed. But are theſe important Ends likely to be gained, by a well-reaſoned Harangue on ſome ſpeculative Point of Orthodoxy, by a clear Confutation of ſome Infidel or Heretic, by a dry, critical Diſcuſſion of ſome dark or dubious Text, by a cold elaborate Diſſertation on ſome moral Subject, or

a curious Diſſection of ſome Paſſion of the Mind, or a vague Declamation on ſome Virtue or Vice, and their Effects on Society and Individuals? Yet *ſuch* I find the general Taſte of Preaching now to be. And in it, without doubt, the Preachers have an Opportunity of ſhewing a great Extent of Learning, Skill in Languages, Acquaintance with Antiquity, much critical Acumen, Depth of Judgment, Sprightlineſs of Wit, Knowledge of human Nature, and Abundance of Zeal, and Averſion to the Enemies of Orthodoxy. It muſt likewiſe be allowed, that thoſe different Species of Sermonizing, do admirably ſuit the different Kinds of Hearers, the cold ſaturnine Complexion of ſome, the curious inquiſitive Taſte of others, the vehement Heat of one Set, the oppoſite Lukewarmneſs of another, and the Love of Novelty and Variety in all: Eſpeecially they ſoothe that infinite Pride and Self-Conceit of the Generality, which makes them ſo ſatisfied with themſelves, and ſo apt to contemn or cenſure others. And, perhaps, were any bold Preacher to take things in another Key, to appear, and to be indeed what he appeared, much in earneſt, and to come more home to the real Concerns and Feelings of Mankind; I am afraid, he would find but a cold Reception from the more polite and refined Part of his Audience: he would in all Probability paſs for an Enthuſiaſt, or at beſt for one who wanted to draw the Attention and

Reſpect of the World by his Singularity. And if, inſtead of leaving his Auditory cool as they choſe to be, he ſhould warm and intereſt their Hearts, and ſend them away ſerious and thoughtful, he would be deemed to have laid *rhetorical Traps* for them, and played artfully on their Paſſions, at the Expence of their Reaſon. So that I cannot tell, PHILONOUS, whether I ought entirely to blame the Preachers, for this cold, languid, unaffecting Vein of Preaching, into which they are fallen; or whether it is to be aſcribed to the *delicate*, ſhall I call it, or the diſſolute Taſte of the Age, which chuſes to be entertained, rather than edified, is too wiſe to be tutored, and too good to be reformed.

As Men are very apt, ſaid I, to be frightened out of one Extreme into another, and to carry their Diſlike of a Party, on ſome Accounts, into a Diſlike of it, on all Accounts; I fanſy the Prevalence of the cool, diſpaſſionate Manner of Preaching, is owing to the general Diſtaſte of thoſe who were called *Puritans*, and of ſuch as have been reckoned their Succeſſors, whether in Principle, or in Name only. Their Manner of Preaching, as you obſerved, was warm, caſuiſtical, and pathetic, addreſſed often to the Conſciences, and generally to the Affections of their Hearers. What was at firſt practiſed through Choice, was afterwards continued through Neceſſity.

ceſſity. For their Reputation and Maintenance depending on the Numbers and Wealth of their Followers, they found it their Intereſt to purſue the ſame Track, to ſoothe the popular Taſte by all the Arts of popular Eloquence, to aſpire at, or to pretend to, higher Degrees of Reformation, and to nearer Communications with *Heaven*, and in fine to keep together their ſuffering or diſcouraged Party, by having, or affecting to have, more Zeal, Purity, and Devotion than their Neighbours. Now, thoſe of the *Eſtabliſhment* being entirely independent on the People as to Subſiſtance, and conſequently under leſs Temptation to conſult the popular Humour, have, from a Diſguſt at the Party, taken a general Diſguſt at thoſe Methods of Popularity, by which they thought the Party ſupported, and ſo have fallen into that dry argumentative Manner of Preaching, which they eſteem the reverſe of what they call the *Fanatical* and *Declamatory*. They chuſe to addreſs to our *Reaſon* alone, and leave *Paſſion* quite out of the queſtion, as a two-edged Tool that may be turned againſt, as well as for them.

I do not doubt, *replied* AGORETES, but there is a great deal in what you have ſaid. I know, likewiſe, that there is a general Outcry among our Sticklers for *Reaſon*, againſt thoſe who talk to the *Paſſions* of their Hearers; but I fear there is

is much Logomachy in ſuch Diſputes. It is no eaſy matter, PHILONOUS, to aſcertain the exact Boundaries of Reaſon and Paſſion, or to know where one terminates, and the other begins. Do your cool Reaſoners never addreſs to the Hopes and Fears of Men? Do they make no Applications to our Deſires of Happineſs, of Pleaſure, of Praiſe? Yet what Paſſions are ſtronger than theſe? On the other hand, do your pathetic Speakers never ſeek to intereſt Reaſon in their Cauſe? Do they expect to excite Affections, without laying before their Hearers the Objects and Arguments proper to excite them? Can any other Faculties apprehend thoſe Objects, and weigh thoſe Arguments, but Reaſon, and the various Powers of Perception, of Approbation, or Blame?——But ſay the reaſoning Speakers, "We ſeek only to convince the Judgment, "which is an equal, ſteady, and uniform Prin-"ciple of Action; where the Paſſions are ſoon "raiſed, but the Impreſſions made upon them "as quickly decay. A few rhetorical Flou-"riſhes, glittering Thoughts, or fanciful Ima-"ges, may excite the *latter*; but ſolid Argu-"ment, and the Force of Conviction alone, can "influence the *former*."—True; the Imagination may be amuſed, and a kind of mechanical or artificial Heat raiſed by ſuch *rhetorical Proluſions*, the Influence of which is ſlight, as its Continuance is uncertain. But is it expected, that

Mankind are to be guided by ſuch ſuperficial and tranſient Emotions, or to be governed by Impreſſions which have no Connexion with their Good or Ill, their Happineſs or Miſery? Can our Affections ſtand neuter, and be unbiaſſed Spectators, where theſe are at ſtake? Or can Judgment operate, where theſe are left out of the queſtion, or where we are ſuppoſed indifferent to either? What can poſſibly engage us to purſue Happineſs, or to avoid Miſery, but our Affection to one, and our Averſion to the other? Without *their* powerful Impulſes, we ſhould be as unactive and immoveable as Stones, notwithſtanding the cleareſt Convictions of Reaſon and Judgment. In ſhort, *Reaſon* is properly no Principle or Spring of Action at all: it may direct, and ſhew us which Courſe of Action is beſt; but without Affection of ſome kind, we can neither be impelled to Action, nor reſtrained from it. And to talk of moving the Affections, without ſuggeſting ſuitable Objects, ſuch as they naturally ſeek after and ultimately tend to; is as abſurd, as to talk of melting Metal without Heat, or of producing any other Effect, without its correſpondent Cauſe. Theſe Objects, by whatever or whomſoever they are ſuggeſted, muſt be perceived, before they can affect the Mind. And to perceive them, is the Buſineſs of the Underſtanding, or of thoſe Organs or Powers of Perception, with which our Nature is endowed.

Therefore,

Therefore, whoever pretends to addreſs to the pure Reaſon and Underſtanding of his Hearers, without offering proper Ends, or Motives, to intereſt their Paſſions, and determine their Choice, ſeems not to conſider the Nature of that various, compounded Creature he has to do with; who ſtrongly attracts what appears good, and repels what appears ill, and is always moved in proportion to the apparent Moment and Nearneſs of either. I conclude then, that it is an Orator's Buſineſs, to get the Paſſions, as well as the Reaſon, of his Hearers to be of his Side, if he means to convince or perſuade; nor ſhall I venture to condemn the Man who employs ſuch Edge-tools, in a Subſerviency to the beſt Purpoſes, though Knavesmay ſometimes abuſe them to the worſt.

I acknowledge, AGORETES, ſaid I, you have, by this manner of arguing, undeceived me as to an Opinion I had entertained, "that a juſt and "fair Speaker had nothing to do with the Paſ-"ſions of his Auditory, but ought to addreſs "himſelf to their Reaſon alone; becauſe the "Voice of Reaſon is not like to be heard amidſt "the Tumult of Paſſion, and becauſe deſigning "Men have often ſucceſsfully employed the "Paſſions of others againſt their Reaſon and "their Intereſt." Now I find, that on the ſame Principle, I ſhould likewiſe condemn the free Uſe of Reaſon itſelf; for *it* too has been a peſti-

lent Engine in the Hands of bad Men. I at length perceive an obvious Diſtinction, which I had hitherto over-looked, the not attending to which has occaſioned all the idle Declamation beſtowed upon this Subject; I mean the Diſtinction between the *calm and leading Affections* of our Nature, which are the main Springs of our Conduct, and thoſe *tranſient Paſſions*, or *inſtantaneous and violent Impulſes*, of *Joy* and *Sorrow*, *Anger*, *Compaſſion*, *Wonder*, and the like, which often ebb and flow with our animal Spirits, depend in a great meaſure on our Conſtitution, as it is more or leſs ſenſible of outward Impreſſions, and operate with a mechanical Force, without any certain or regular Cauſes. I can eaſily ſee of what Conſequence it is, rightly to direct and properly to move the *former* Set of Affections; and how eaſy, as well as of how little uſe it is, to raiſe the *latter*, by the trival Arts of a puerile Oratory; ſince that may be done by Sound, as readily as by Senſe, and by Looks, Geſtures, and the mere Mechaniſm of a Voice, as ſucceſsfully as by the higheſt Strains of true Eloquence. Whereas to impreſs, regulate, and controul the other Affections, muſt be the nobleſt Operation of Reaſon, and the very Perfection of the rhetorical Art; greatly to be ſought and ſtudied by thoſe who wiſh to inſtruct and reform Mankind. Alas! AGORETES, where is ſuch an Art to be learned,

learned, and where are the living Models of it to be found, whom we may copy after?

If we cannot find *living* Ones, ſaid AGORETES, we muſt be content with the *Dead*, who ſeem to have underſtood the Art beſt. However, I have the Happineſs to be acquainted with one Gentleman now alive, who is at once the beſt Model of Preaching, and the nobleſt Example of Living, I ever knew, the *Miniſter* of the neighbouring Pariſh.

I ſuppoſe, ſaid I, you mean THEODORUS.

The very ſame, ſaid AGORETES; a Man of the moſt extraordinary Simplicity of Character.

I have heard him repreſented, ſaid I, as a great Enthuſiaſt, and noted for the Singularity of his Behaviour, as well as of his Manner of Preaching.

I do not doubt, replied AGORETES, but THEODORUS has a conſiderable Tincture of Enthuſiaſm in his Conſtitution, but it is of ſo refined a nature, that it neither impairs his Judgment nor ſpoils his Temper, but renders him ſo much the more ſenſible of the Charms of Religion, and the Beauty of Virtue. His Enthuſiaſm is all ſober and lovely, a pure lambent

Flame, which enlightens at the ſame time that it warms. Nor need you wonder that it is of a kind ſo uncommon. For it is no dim refracted Beam, but is lighted up in him directly from the original Source of Light. It is by immediate Converſe with GOD himſelf, by living, moving, and acting in his Preſence, that he becomes *God-like* in his Air and whole Deportment, lives above the World, and breathes ſuch a ſuperior kind of Humanity, as not only enchants thoſe who converſe with him, but almoſt transforms them into the ſame Spirit. Oh! PHILONOUS, he very nearly approaches the Image of Him that made him.

That is a noble, and withal a natural Effect, ſaid I, of the exalted Correſpondence which he maintains. But as I have heard much about this ſingular Man, I ſhall be obliged to you, AGORETES, if you will let me more particularly into his Character.

AGORETES ſaid he would gladly comply with my Requeſt; for indeed, PHILONOUS, adds he, I reckon myſelf extremely happy in his Acquaintance, and wiſh you and all my Friends a Share in the ſame Happineſs.

THEODORUS has formed himſelf upon the Model of the *Apoſtles*. You would think he intended

tended to revive the Taſte of ancient Manners, and bring back the primitive Plainneſs of unadulterated *Chriſtianity*. He ſeems to underſtand little of the Modes or Elegancies of the preſent Age: Yet the politeſt Sort of People love to converſe with him; he has ſomething ſo alluring, as well as venerable, in his Aſpect and Manners. His Religion wears no forbidding or formal Air: When he talks of it, which he is ſure to do as often as he can with Propriety, it is without Oſtentation: He does not impoſe his Sentiments, but ſteals them upon you without the leaſt Appearance of Superiority. His Sentiments, tho' delivered in Words void of all Varniſh, are ſo juſt and grand, that they never fail of making an Impreſſion. It is ſcarce poſſible to be in his Company, without being the wiſer or the better for it: Whatever Subject he breathes upon, takes a religious kind of Tincture. Piety is become ſo natural to him, or rather is ſo inlaid in his Conſtitution, that it ſhines out in his very Looks, no leſs than in all he ſays and does. One may apply to him the Words of a noble Writer; "Sanctity ſits ſo eaſy, ſo unaffected, "and ſo graceful upon him, that in him we "behold the very *Beauty* of Holineſs. He is as "chearful, as familiar, and condeſcending in his "Converſation, as he is ſtrict, regular, and ex-"emplary in his Piety; as well-bred and ac-"compliſhed as a *Courtier*, as reverend and ve-

"nerable

" nerable as an *Apoſtle.*" He looks down upon the Pomp and Pride of Life, with a generous Indifference; and receives Praiſe, rather as an Expreſſion of Kindneſs, than as a Tribute due to his Merit. I never knew a Man ſo thoroughly and ingenuouſly humble, a Character as valuable as it is rare. You ſee no Attention to himſelf, no indirect or retorted Glances upon his own Reputation or Endowments. He ſeldom talks of himſelf, unleſs when the declining it would argue Vanity or Affectation: And when he does it, it is with Simplicity and Grandeur, as of a third Perſon; neither proudly concealing his Virtues, nor oſtentatiouſly expoſing his Faults.

Surely, ſaid I, a *Miniſter* of ſuch a Character as you deſcribe, muſt be highly eſteemed, and even venerated by all who know him, particularly by thoſe of his own Pariſh.

He is infinitely Popular, ſaid AGORETES; as indeed how can he be otherwiſe, with ſuch Qualifications? And yet without either valuing Popularity for itſelf, or pretending to deſpiſe it, he uſes it only as an Engine of Uſefulneſs. He is the *Oracle* of his Pariſh, in their *ſecular* as well as *ſpiritual* Concerns. He adjuſts their Differences, with ſo tender and impartial a Regard for both Parties, that they never expreſs any Diſſatisfaction with his Deciſions, though made againſt

againſt them. The *Sick* are his peculiar Care. He improves thoſe happy Moments of Diſtreſs, to diſengage them from this World, and raiſe their Views to a better. He is a Father to the *Poor*, a Guardian and a Patron to the *Widow* and *Orphan*. His Revenue, though moderate, being managed with great Œconomy, enables him to do many Acts of Charity, which he is at pains to conceal.

But how amiable ſoever his private Character may be, the *Pulpit* is the Province where he ſhines in the moſt conſpicuous Light. His Conduct is ſo unexceptionably fair, and illuſtrious, that all his Inſtructions are accompanied with an irreſiſtable Authority. I dare ſay, PHILONOUS, you never knew a Man who was heard with more Attention and Reſpect: Indeed, no wonder; ſince his Hearers can trace in his *Life* every Feature of Virtue, which he delineates in his *Sermons*.

Without doubt, ſaid I, the Harmony between his *Doctrine* and *Manners* muſt give a double Weight to all he ſays. I have obſerved, added I, that he excels in one Part of Eloquence, which is but rarely ſtudied by our public Speakers; I mean the *Expreſſion of the Countenance*. For I remember, whenever he deſcribes any Vice, or draws any vicious Character, he has ſuch a ſignificant

nificant Indignation in his Looks as raiſes your Abhorrence at the odious Form, thus repreſented in all its Uglineſs. But when Virtue is his Theme, his Words do not expreſs more Complacence than his Eyes, his Air, and every Geſture: His Countenance ſeems to open and expand itſelf with the more Serenity, and the greater Elevation. His very Soul ſpeaks out in every Word and Motion: He at once awes and charms you with the Dignity of a Form ſo alluring.

Every intelligent Hearer, ſaid AGORETES, muſt have made the ſame Obſervation; indeed all his Hearers have felt the Effect of this rare Talent, whether they have obſerved it or no. But I muſt confeſs, I am never ſo ſenſible of the marvellous Force of his natural Eloquence, as when leaving every inferiour Subject, he exhibits to us the Father of Men and Angels in the original Excellence and Majeſty of his Character. So ſublime a Theme fills him with Rapture and Enthuſiaſm. It is his favourite Topic, where he pours out all his Heart; and it commonly throws him into ſuch a Fervour of Affection, that he muſt be a cold Hearer indeed, who can remain unmoved with the ſacred Vehemence of his Soul. His Voice always riſes with the Subject; and I have ſeen his Eyes, and whole Countenance, glow with ſuch uncommon Spirit, that

I have been ſeized as with ſome powerful Contagion, and felt my whole Frame thrilled with a *religious Paſſion*, which in a manner tranſported me out of myſelf, and made me forget where I was, and whom I was hearing.——No longer ago than laſt *Sunday*, (for I remember it well) he was upon his darling Theme, the Perfections of the *Godhead*, and that Homage which ariſes from juſt Sentiments of them.

I perceived that AGORETES was warmed likewiſe with the Subject, and his Account of THEODORUS's Manner of Preaching, ſo far as to forget that I had alſo been one of his Hearers the ſame Day: therefore, I allowed him to give vent to that charming Vein of Enthuſiaſm, which is ſo natural to him, and which the Remembrance of THEODORUS's Sermon had again awakened, by the Power of an irreſiſtible Sympathy.

THEODORUS having demonſtrated to us, continued he, that more lovely and ſublime Deſcriptions of the *Deity* are found in the ſacred Writings, than in any human Compoſitions whatever, proceeded in the following manner: (for his Diſcourſe made ſuch a deep Impreſſion on me, that I ſhall never forget it) "This, my Brethren, "this is the Character, which the Scriptures "exhibit to us of the GOD whom *we* profeſs to "worſhip——no *local Deity*, you ſee, like thoſe

"of

" of the idolatrous Heathens, preſiding over this,
" or the other Province of Nature, the Heavens,
" the Air, the Earth, the Sea; inhabiting this
" Mountain, that Grove, or that Valley; the
" *tutelar God* of this City, or the peculiar
" *Guardian* of that Nation. *Our* GOD is con-
" fined to no Spot: his Regards are limited to
" no Community: He rides on the Circuit of
" the Heavens: his Eyes run to and fro through-
" out the whole Earth: Hell itſelf is open be-
" fore Him, and Deſtruction hath no Covering.
" He maketh the Clouds his Chariot, and the
" Winds his Meſſengers: all the Elements fulfil
" his Commands. Darkneſs is his Pavilion;
" the Earth is his Footſtool, and in the deep
" Waters his Wonders are ſeen. All Nature
" is his Temple, all Space his Abode; every
" living thing is the Workmanſhip of his Hand;
" and over all his parental Care and tender
" Mercies extend, without the leaſt Shadow of
" Partiality, or the ſmalleſt Tincture of Envy."
—Here the eloquent THEODORUS made a Stop, which, like a ſolemn Pauſe in Muſic, only heightened the Attention of his Audience: then turning round among them with an Air of Surprize and Rapture, he aſked them in the moſt earneſt and awful manner; " Can any of you,
" my Friends, behold ſo auguſt a Character,
" and not *venerate* it; ſo amiable a Character,
" and not *love* it? Do you obſerve, with Plea-

" ſure, the tender Dam ſpreading her ſheltering
" Wings over her little fluttering Family; and
" can you contemplate, with Indifference, the
" univerſal Parent ſpreading the Wings of his
" almighty Love, wide as the arched Heavens,
" over his numerous Offspring? Do the gene-
" rous Fervours and melting Sympathy of the
" ſincere Friend, call forth your grateful Rap-
" tures; and ſhall the over-flowing Compaſſions
" of the great Friend of Men, and Lover of
" Souls, who hath done ſuch marvellous things
" for their Salvation and Happineſs, excite with-
" in you no Sentiments of Eſteem and Grati-
" tude? Every one admires the true Patriot, the
" Father of his Country, who only lives to
" ſerve, and would joyfully die to ſave it; and
" ſhall we not reverence and adore the Father,
" Protector, and Head of the univerſal Polity
" of Men and Angels, who watches, and cares
" for all? Shall we not reverence and adore that
" matchleſs Hero, that divine Deliverer, who,
" for the Reſtoration of a degenerate and un-
" thankful Race, chearfully condeſcended to
" lead a Life of unexampled Sorrow, and to
" ſuffer a Death overwhelming to every Power
" of Humanity?"—The amiable Preacher ſtill went on; " Do we not feel, my Brethren, that
" even the dim Rays of Wiſdom, Power, and
" Goodneſs often dazzle our Sight, and charm
" our Hearts, as they are reflected from *created*

" Patterns

" Patterns of Excellence? Ought not then the
" *uncreated* Original, from whom Wiſdom flows
" as from its eternal Source, in whom Power
" reſides, as in its native Seat, and to whom
" Goodneſs belongs, as a vital and immortal
" Principle; ought not, I ſay, this wiſeſt,
" mightieſt, and beſt of Beings, in a manner to
" engroſs all our Eſteem, and to abſorb all our
" Love?——All Nature is full of GOD. He is
" enthroned in Light: He creates Darkneſs:
" He hath his Way in the Whirlwind, ſendeth
" abroad his Lightnings, giveth Snow like
" Wool, ſcattereth the Hoar-froſt like Aſhes,
" and caſteth forth his Ice like Morſels? Who
" can ſtand before his Cold? Who can thun-
" der with a Voice like GOD? Need I tell you,
" that it is He who diſtils the Rain from his
" Bottles, who opens the bubbling Fountains,
" who covers the Fields with Graſs, and the
" Hills with Flocks, who ſpins out the fleecy
" Air, and ſpreads forth the liquid Plains, who
" refreſhes us with his Winds, lights us with
" his Sun, and entertains us at his Table, richly
" furniſhed with all the Dainties of Heaven?—
" But now I appeal to you, whether we have
" not infinite Reaſon to confide in ſuch benefi-
" cent Wiſdom, to ſubmit to a Power, at once
" ſo awfully, and ſo munificently employed, to
" receive with the higheſt Gratitude ſuch a Pro-
" fuſion of Goodneſs, and to reſign ourſelves to

" a

" a Providence ſo watchful, ſo active, ſo un-
" wearied in our Behalf? Is the Creator ſo glo-
" rioufly conſpicuous in every Scene of his
" Works; and ſhall He paſs by unobſerved,
" unadmired, unadored? Do we even *feel* Him
" preſent with us, chearing our Frame, irra-
" diating our Minds, and opening within us a
" thouſand Veins of Good-humour and Glad-
" neſs, which we can often aſcribe to no other
" Cauſe but *his* powerful Influence; and ſhall
" we not ſtand in awe before Him, and bid
" every giddy Thought, and every tumultuous
" Paſſion, be ſtill? Do we reſpect the Preſence
" of our Fellow-creatures, eſpecially if a little
" raiſed above us, and reverence the Majeſty of
" Princes; and ſhall not the Majeſty of GOD
" collect and controul all our Powers of Action,
" inſpire every noble Sentiment, and awaken
" every worthy Affection?——Great GOD!
" thou ever-preſent, ever ſtreaming Fountain of
" Light and Love, permit us to bend down our
" Souls in low Proſtration before Thee. In-
" veſted and ſuſtained as we are, by thine awful
" Preſence, placed in thy magnificent Temple
" not made with Hands, and encircled by the
" joyful Chorus of thy Creatures, ſhall we not
" ſing a ſacred Hymn, and adore the all-ſur-
" rounding *Deity*, ſupremely great, ſupremely
" good? Or muſt it be thought, my Brethren,
" I ſay, muſt it be thought a ſolemn *Farce* of
" Devotion,

" Devotion, to celebrate, in unaffected Strains
" of Praiſe, our common Parent, Friend, and
" GOD? What then! ſhall our Hearts feel, and
" triumph in, his Goodneſs; and ſhall we not
" expreſs our *inward* Rapture in *vocal* and mutual
" Concert? Will any one ſay, that it is trifling
" and unmeaning Ceremony, to give vent to
" the Flame of Piety which glows within, in
" natural, decent, and rational Acts of Homage?
" Or can any one think it diſpleaſing to the
" GOD OF LOVE, or unſuitable to the Dignity
" of *Man*, to increaſe and feed this heavenly
" Flame, by devout Proteſtations, repeated
" Vows, and grateful Thankſgivings?——We
" know, and rejoice in the Knowledge, that
" *He* whom *we* worſhip, hath none of the un-
" communicative or vain Grandeur of an *Eaſtern*
" *Monarch*, who is not to be approached, but
" with abject Proſtrations, nor addreſſed, but
" with ſervile Flattery. We preſume not to
" *inform* the Almighty, by our Prayers, nor to
" *move* Him to act in Character, by our Soli-
" citations. His Underſtanding is infinite: He
" is of one Mind; and who can turn Him?——
" No, Sirs, our Forms of Worſhip, can neither
" inſtruct nor alter the *Eternal*. But then they
" aſſiſt and enliven *us*, who are groſs and ſenſible
" Creatures, in contemplating and recognizing
" his Perfections; and they render our Senſe of
" his Preſence more deep and efficacious. To
" realize

" realize that Preſence daily, by direct and ani-
" mated Addreſſes, and to grow familiar, if I
" may ſo ſpeak, with thoſe Perfections, by
" making them the habitual Objects of our
" Adoration, cannot fail of hallowing and ex-
" alting our Conceptions, kindling our Hearts
" into the warmeſt Feelings of divine Love, and
" powerfully inciting our Imitation of that Being
" whom we adore. Prayer, in its eſſential Acts,
" includes a firm Faith in the Promiſes of GOD,
" an hearty Acquieſcence in his Adminiſtration,
" and an humble Hope in his Goodneſs. But
" I once more appeal to you; muſt not ſuch
" Acts produce Serenity and Joy; and muſt not
" theſe naturally ſweeten the Temper, and by
" conſequence improve the very Foundation of
" Goodneſs in the Soul? Muſt not the frequent-
" ly acknowledging our Dependence, our Sub-
" jection, our Obligations, and our earneſtly
" applying to *Heaven* for every thing we want,
" tend, of neceſſity, to make us humble and
" loyal, thankful, and reſigned Creatures? If it
" hath withal pleaſed the ſupreme Ruler, for
" theſe and other excellent Ends, to preſcribe
" ſuch Acknowledgments, and ſuch Applications,
" in order to obtain his Grace and Favour;
" ſhall we ſhort-ſighted Mortals pretend to cor-
" rect the Wiſdom that made us?"——The good Man ſpoke theſe Words with a Voice raiſed above his ordinary Pitch, and with a Degree of

Ardour

Ardour that ſtrongly affected his Audience. The People ſeemed to catch a Spirit of Devotion from his Eyes as well as Words, and eaſily entered into the Paſſion, which he appeared to feel ſo powerfully himſelf.——But what have I been doing, PHILONOUS, running on with this long Account of THEODORUS's Sermon, when perhaps you heard it yourſelf?

I confeſs, AGORETES, ſaid I, I did hear it: but I was willing to be entertained with it once more, and to have the agreeable Sentiments I felt, when I heard it, revived. I hope therefore, you will forgive me, for not having interrupted ſo delightful a Narration.

Well, PHILONOUS, it is no unuſual thing for you to ſerve me in this manner, ſaid AGORETES. I wonder, however, you can allow your Friends to appear in ſo ridiculous a Light. You ſhould have checked me when you ſaw me beginning to declaim at ſuch a rate. I muſt own I am ſo charmed with THEODORUS, and delighted with his Sentiments, that as I can never forget them, ſo I am apt to throw them out on every Occaſion, though often perhaps unſeaſonably.

Enthuſiaſm, ſaid I, is an infectious thing, and generally grows out of the Admiration whether

of

of Perſons or of Things.——But yonder comes the very Man we are ſpeaking of, your Friend THEODORUS. I ſhould be glad to be introduced to him.

That, ſaid AGORETES, I undertake very frankly to do: for he is particularly fond of enlarging the Circle of his Acquaintance among Youth.——And what think you, PHILONOUS, if we ſhould engage him to talk of *Preaching*, his own Province, and hear from himſelf, who is ſo able a Practitioner, the beſt Rules of the Art?

I heartily agreed to what AGORETES propoſed, and thanked him for his kind Offer.

As ſoon as THEODORUS came up to us, AGORETES, addreſſing himſelf to him, ſaid, I beg leave, *Sir*, to introduce to your Acquaintance a Friend of mine, who is very deſirous of being received into the Liſt of your's. He loves Letters and learned Men, but particularly *good* Men; and therefore I know he will hardly need any farther Recommendation to your Friendſhip.

The good Man received me with open Arms, and a Countenance which ſpoke as open an Heart, telling me I needed no other Recommendation, than being the Friend of AGORETES.

After

After a little general Diſcourſe, you are come, THEODORUS, ſaid AGORETES, moſt opportunely to our Aſſiſtance. We were talking of Preachers, and the different Methods of Preaching, which have obtained. We wanted much to know, what is the true Art of doing it, with the moſt Probability of Succeſs. Now, *Sir*, as this is a Taſk, in which you are daily engaged, and we are perſuaded have much at Heart, we ſhall eſteem it a ſpecial Favour, if you will impart your Sentiments on ſo important a Point.

Gentlemen, ſaid THEODORUS, you interrogate me on a very nice and difficult Subject, in which it is no eaſy matter to lay down an exact or complete Syſtem of Rules, upon which one can certainly depend. The Art you talk of is, I doubt, beſt learned by Practice and Experience. No Theory can give it; and I queſtion whether Experience can inſure it Succeſs, though executed with the moſt conſummate Skill.

In thoſe reſpects you have mentioned, ſaid AGORETES, I believe it reſembles many other Arts; yet I cannot help thinking, that it has its eſtabliſhed Rules, from which whoever deviates has the leaſt Chance to ſucceed, and to which whoſoever conforms his Practice, is moſt likely

to attain the Perfection of the Art, and to ſecure Succeſs in it.

Doubtleſs, replied THEODORUS, it has, like all other Arts, its peculiar Precepts, and Method of Practice: but I am afraid it is more difficult, in this Art than in moſt others, to fix upon a juſt Syſtem of them. It is an Art that depends more on *Taſte* and *Sentiment*, than on *Reaſoning* and *Rules*. Every one pretends to judge of it, and carries about with him his favourite Standard, by which he decides on the Practice of it. It is an Art of Speaking to the HEART of Man, which of all Pupils is the moſt intractable, variable, and indocile. It is an Art, than which I know none that requires more ſingular Talents to execute it well, a more quick Apprehenſion, a more fruitful Imagination, a deeper Inſight into the human Mind, a greater Acquaintance with Life and Manners, or a more commanding Eloquence. In ſhort, my Friend, it is an Art, which, though I have been ſtudying it all my Life, I am ſtill to learn, and in the Practice of which I find every Day new Difficulty.

Pray, *Sir*, ſaid I, what do you reckon the prime and moſt eſſential Talent of a good Preacher, without which he does not ſo much as deſerve the Name?

I doubt, *Sir*, ſaid THEODORUS, before we can judge which are the firſt, ſecond, or indeed any of the Qualifications eſſential to this Art, we muſt know, in general, what the Art is, and what is its Aim or Scope; elſe we ſhall talk in a very vague manner of the Talents required in a Performer.

Pray then, replied AGORETES haſtily, oblige us, good *Sir*, with your Notion of the Art; that we may know who is, or is not, fit to practiſe it.

In order to find that out, ſaid THEODORUS, I muſt beg your, and your Friend's Aſſiſtance in eſtabliſhing ſome common and allowed Principles, from which we may reaſon.——Does not every reputable Art propoſe to accompliſh ſome Effect, that ſhall be beneficial, or ornamental, to Society? For inſtance, does not *Architecture* propoſe the lodging Mankind with Safety and Convenience? *Painting* and *Muſic*, their Entertainment and Pleaſure?

Doubtleſs they do, ſaid AGORETES; and every reputable Art does the ſame. Utility, or Pleaſure, or both, are ſtill propoſed in one Shape or another.

What

What then, ſaid THEODORUS, is the Effect propoſed to be accompliſhed by the Art of *Preaching?*

I know none other, replied AGORETES, but that of making Men wiſer and better.

But is not this Effect, ſaid THEODORUS, propoſed likewiſe by other Arts, by *Government*, *Poetry*, *Rhetoric*, and many others that might be named?

I make no queſtion but it is, anſwered AGORETES: but then I ſuppoſe they accompliſh their End in a different Manner.

All the Difficulty then, ſaid THEODORUS, will lie in ſhewing wherein that Difference conſiſts. For different Arts either employ *different Materials and Inſtruments*, or the ſame Materials and Inſtruments in a *different manner*. Now I ſhould be glad to know, in which of theſe Senſes you underſtand that Diverſity of Manner.

I do not ſo readily enter into your general Obſervation, ſaid AGORETES: pray explain it a little by ſome Examples.

What Materials does *Painting* employ, ſaid THEODORUS, to perform its Imitations of Nature or Life?

It employs Colours, replied AGORETES, of various Combinations of Light and Shade.

And how does *Muſic* accompliſh its End, ſaid THEODORUS?

By means of Sounds, anſwered AGORETES.

What Inſtruments does *Poetry* make uſe of, ſaid THEODORUS, to perform its Imitations?

I know none other, returned AGORETES, but Diſcourſe of a certain kind, that is duly turned with Numbers and Harmony.

And what are thoſe Inſtruments, ſaid THEODORUS, with which *Rhetoric*, *Hiſtory*, and *Philoſophy* accompliſh their reſpective Ends?

What other, replied AGORETES, but Diſcourſe likewiſe of different kinds.

Which of theſe Inſtruments then, ſaid THEODORUS, does the Art of *Preaching* employ, to produce the Effect which you have already aſſigned it?

None

None other, ſurely, but Diſcourſe, replied AGORETES.

Since then *Poetry*, *Rhetoric*, *Hiſtory*, and *Philoſophy*, as well as *Preaching*, ſeem all to employ Diſcourſe in common, muſt we not allow, ſaid THEODORUS, that they all operate with the ſame Inſtruments?

Doubtleſs we muſt, ſaid AGORETES.

Since therefore we already found, ſaid THEODORUS, that they mean to accompliſh the ſame End; muſt not the Difference among them, if they do really differ, ariſe from the *different Manner* of uſing the *ſame Inſtruments?*

Certainly it muſt, ſaid AGORETES.

Wherein then, ſaid THEODORUS, does this Difference conſiſt?

I apprehend, ſaid AGORETES, that as there are various kinds of Diſcourſe, each of thoſe Arts has its peculiar kind appropriated to it, which ſufficiently diſtinguiſhes it from all the reſt. Thus *Hiſtory*, that I mean which we call *civil*, is a bare Narration of Facts, or of the Actions of Men; yet by the inſtructive Experiences, which

the Reader derives from thence of their Cauſes and Effects, it teaches him to imitate the Good, and to ſhun the Bad. *Philoſophy*, by which I underſtand the *moral* kind, ſhews us the Conſtitution and Connexions of our Nature, and from thence traces our Duty and Obligations, points out, in the way of Experiment, the ſtrict Connexion between our Duty and Happineſs, and thus powerfully perſuades us to the Practice of it. *Poetry*, that eſpecially of the nobler kinds, does, by means of the more exalted Language of Verſe and Numbers, imitate Affections and Characters, paint human Life in all its Varieties of Action and Paſſions, and by thoſe juſt and moving Pictures, allures us to Virtue, and deters us from Vice. But in *what* manner the Art of *Preaching* employs Diſcourſe, or what other Engines it uſes to perſuade, I do not pretend to know. This we want to learn of you, *Sir*, who are a Practitioner in the Art.

It is, I believe, no eaſy Matter, ſaid THEODORUS, to determine the preciſe Manner in which *Preaching* employs Diſcourſe, or to ſhew the various ways it profeſſes to accompliſh its Ends. Perhaps it borrows ſomething from each of the Arts already mentioned, and has beſides ſomewhat peculiar of its own, which diſtinguiſhes it from them.

We

We would gladly hear what that is, ſaid I.

From whence, ſaid THEODORUS, does a *Preacher* derive the original Name? For I ſuppoſe it is an ancient Title or Denomination. And perhaps the *Title* may ſuggeſt to us the *Office*, and the peculiar kind of Diſcourſe we want to diſcover.

I fanſy, ſaid AGORETES, you mean to refer us to the ancient Word, GOSPEL, from whence he derives his Title; and by a Preacher of it, Εὐαγγελιστὴς, an EVANGELIST, would ſuggeſt to us one who brings or announces GOOD-NEWS to Mankind.

You have perfectly hit my Meaning, ſaid THEODORUS. What then is the *Good-news*, which he is ſupppoſed to announce to us?

We deſire rather, replied AGORETES, to hear that of you, who can explain it beſt.

What elſe then can it be but this, ſaid THEODORUS, that a SAVIOUR is come for the Redemption of a loſt World, a World enthralled by Superſtition and Vice? A *Preacher* therefore was originally "one ſent by this *Saviour*, JESUS "CHRIST, to proclaim to Mankind this im-

" portant Meſſage, and to perſuade them to re-
" pent, and comply with the Terms of the
" *Goſpel*, by propoſing the Pardon of their Sins,
" the Grace of the Almighty, Reſurrection from
" the Dead, and eternal Life." This was his original Buſineſs and Function, as explained by our *Saviour* himſelf: and therefore I apprehend his preſent Buſineſs cannot be very different.

Anciently, when that Meſſage was firſt proclaimed, ſaid AGORETES, the World was *Heathen*, and had not received the *Goſpel*: it was therefore neceſſary to go about every where propagating the Faith to the unbelieving Nations: but now, that it is every where received, and paſſes current in the *Chriſtian* World, there does not ſeem to be any Neceſſity of laying again the Foundations, and perſuading Men to believe thoſe Truths, of which they are already convinced.

Though there may not be the ſame Neceſſity of converting Men to the *Chriſtian* Faith, ſaid THEODORUS, that is, to a bare Aſſent to the Hiſtory, and Doctrines, of our *Saviour*; yet I fear there is as much need as ever, of exhorting them to entertain *Chriſtianity* in the genuine Spirit, and vital Senſe of it, or, in other Words, to be *wiſe* and *good*; and the Inſtrument with which Preachers are *chiefly* to perſuade, is one which

which *Heaven* itſelf has provided, and which they are not at liberty, whilſt they continue in that Character, to uſe or throw aſide at pleaſure, even none other than the GOSPEL of CHRIST, that is, the whole Syſtem of *Chriſtianity*, comprehending the Hiſtory and Facts revealed or narrated, Doctrines taught, the Precepts inculcated, and the Sanctions with which theſe are enforced.

Pray, *Sir*, ſaid I, are the Methods of Perſuaſion proper to ſome of the other Arts, excluded from this Art, or ſuperſeded by this grand Inſtrument, which it uſes in order to accompliſh the noble End it has in view?

By no means, returned THEODORUS: it may take in all the other laudable and innocent Ways of Perſuaſion, which are not inconſiſtent with the Nature and Dignity of the Subject, and are adapted to reach the End it propoſes.

What then, ſaid AGORETES, is the principal Buſineſs or Duty of a Preacher, upon the whole; to which he ought to render all the Arts of Perſuaſion entirely ſubſervient?

He muſt, in my Opinion, ſaid THEODORUS, "explain and preſs the eſſential Doctrines of "*Chriſtianity*, lay open the Facts in their full "Strength and Evidence, vindicate and enforce

" its Laws and Sanctions," and then leave the reſt to the Almighty.

But as Preachers have generally to do with People, ſaid AGORETES, who believe their *Bible*, and are convinced of the Truth of what they find there, before they go to Church, what is the main thing they ought to have in their Eye, and chiefly to purſue, in order effectually to perſuade their Audience to be *wiſe* and *good?*

I readily acknowledge, replied THEODORUS, that the Point of View in which a Preacher ought to regard his Audience, at leaſt the Bulk of it, is not as *Unbelievers* in the largeſt Senſe of that Word, but as *profeſſed Chriſtians*; who, having been educated in the *Chriſtian* Church, are ſuppoſed to have embraced the *Chriſtian* Faith, and to be convinced of its moſt important Articles. But as Experience makes it too evident, that Men may profeſs the Faith of *Chriſtians*, and yet live worſe than thoſe who do not, the principal Aim of a Preacher, that is, of one who deſerves the Name, muſt be, not ſo much to teach his Hearers what they do *not* know, as " to impreſs them with a deep and awful Senſe " of what they *do*;" not ſo much to win their Belief of the Doctrines, and their Aſſent to the Obligations of *Chriſtianity*, as " to turn their " Belief and their Aſſent into Principles of " Action,

" Action, and to inſpire them with a ſovereign " Reliſh of what they know and acknowledge to " be their Duty, with a ſublime and permanent " Love of Religion and Virtue." In ſhort, the whole Myſtery of the Art, is " to make them " CHRISTIANS in Spirit and in Truth, not in " Name only."

This great Principle, kept ſteadily in view, will, at one Blow, ſweep off infinite Materials, with which ignorant Preachers ſeek to adorn, and deſigning ones mean to recommend their Sermons: it will ſuperſede many uſeleſs Arguments, which ſome well-meaning Men uſe to convince the Unbelieving, confute the Erroneous, and confirm the Faithful; and which ſome fiery Zealots employ to ſet a ſmall Part of Mankind againſt all the reſt; and it will contract the true Deſign, and the whole Energy of the Art, within its proper Bounds, " the reclaiming the Bad " from Vice, and improving the Good in Virtue." *This* then, I conceive, is the Buſineſs of a *Preacher of the Goſpel*, *this* is his Pride and Glory.

We ſhould now be glad, ſaid AGORETES, to hear your Opinion how this is to be done, or in what Manner a Preacher is to employ the noble Inſtrument which *Heaven* has put in his Hand, in order to operate moſt ſucceſsfully upon his Hearers.

As

As the Subject, said THEODORUS, on which the Preacher is to operate is MAN, I ſuppoſe he muſt take him ſuch as he finds him; as a Creature neither endowed with pure Intelligence and Reaſon, nor entirely under the Directions of Senſe and Appetite, but as compounded of *Body* and *Mind*, *Senſe* and *Reaſon*, *Conſcience* and *Affection*; Principles of different, and often oppoſite Natures, and productive of different, and ſometimes the moſt interfering, Effects; Principles of wonderful Energy, when they conſpire together, but proportionably weak, when divided or ſet in oppoſition one to the other. I apprehend, therefore, that the Addreſs of the Preacher muſt lie in paying a proper Regard to the mixed and compounded Character of ſo various and delicate a Creature; by engaging, if poſſible, the ſeveral Principles of his Nature in the ſame Intereſt, and uniting their Force in the Production of the ſame Effect.

Pray, *Sir*, ſaid I, how is this poſſible to be done? For one would think that ſuch contrary Principles, how artfully ſoever ſet to work, would baffle each other's Effect.

It is only imitating, ſaid THEODORUS, the great Artiſt of *Life* and *Nature*, who at once charms our *Senſe* by the wonderful Apparatus and

and Decorations of his Works; aſtoniſhes our *Imagination* by the immenſe Variety, infinite Complication, and yet marvellous Regularity of his Machinery; informs our *Reaſon* by the Simplicity, and Coherence of Deſign, which runs through the Whole; and, laſtly, who intereſts and agitates every *Affection* by the amazing Subſerviency of every ſingle Wheel and Movement of the vaſt Machine, to ſtrike and to delight us.—In like manner, ought the Preacher, who means to produce the ſame Effects, to addreſs himſelf to the *Reaſon*, or *Underſtanding*, to the *Conſcience*, to the *Imagination*, to the *Ears*, and to the *Eyes* of his Audience. If *any* of theſe Inlets to Perception and Perſuaſion are neglected by him, the Force of his Addreſs will, as I ſaid, be proportionably diminiſhed: but if he apply to them *all* at once, with the proper Arts adapted to each, he will break in upon the Mind, with ſuch Light and Power, as will, with the Help of the Almighty, bear down all Oppoſition, and give him an abſolute Empire over the human Heart.

We ſhould be glad, ſaid AGORETES, to be let a little more particularly into this divine Art.

Alas, replied THEODORUS, how ſhall I teach you an Art to which I am a Stranger myſelf? From what Altar ſhall I borrow the holy Fire, to impart it to you? With what Heaven-taught Eloquence

Eloquence muſt that Man be inſpired, who can fully explain, what it is to inform or rather feed the Underſtanding, with the awful and ſublime Truths of Religion, to hold up theſe in ſome grand and luminous Point of View, from whence a Stream of Light ſhall ſpread on every ſide, in all the previous and ſucceeding Parts of a Diſcourſe; where the Mind ſhall reſt and repoſe itſelf, and from whence it may launch forth again with freſh Attention and Vigour? What Art muſt the Teacher have, to ſelect the main and leading Principle, upon which the Subject *turns*, to ſet this before the Hearer in every View, till he has thoroughly entered into it, and to conduct him gradually through all its Proofs and Conſequences, by a ſhort and eaſy Chain? The Mind of Man is wonderfully pleaſed, to know the Ground and Reaſon of every thing, to ſee the Concluſion in its Principle, and to be led through a Succeſſion of Principles, perceiving, at each Step, the gradual Dawn of Truth breaking upon it. The Ambition of the Mind is highly gratified, to purſue a Series of Things, which have a Connexion among themſelves, and a Reference to ſome important Point; to graſp at once the whole Deſign and Compaſs of a Subject, and to diſcern the Order and Dependance of the ſeveral Parts, all conſpiring to illuſtrate and ſtrike home the principal Truth in queſtion. And, ſurely, the Preacher can never want

want Materials to gratify his Hearers in this manner, if he rightly uſe that glorious Inſtrument we formerly took notice of, the *Goſpel*; which unveils to us the great Diſpenſations of *Heaven* to the Sons of Men, in which there is to be found a wonderful Depth of Deſign, and an illuſtrious Concatenation of Events leading on its Accompliſhment.

Pray, *Sir*, ſaid AGORETES, is not ſuch an argumentative and connected Method of Preaching as you ſeem to propoſe, too refined and philoſophical for the Generality of Hearers; few of whom are able to attend to a Series of Proofs, to remount to Principles, and to deſcend from thence through a Train of Conſequences?

I do not ſay, replied THEODORUS, that the Bulk of Mankind are able to ſtretch their Attention long, or to take in remote, much leſs ſubtil, Links of a Chain of Reaſoning; they need to be often relieved, to have Truth made wondrous plain, and the Steps which conduct to it ſhort, ſenſible, and eaſy: but then, as the Parts of a great Building, without a due Proportion and Symmetry to bind them together, diſtract the Sight amidſt their Multiplicity, and Independence on one another; ſo a Sermon, without a ſtrict Unity of Deſign, without a regular Diſtribution and Order of Parts among themſelves, as well as

a juſt and uniform Subordination to the principal Point in view, will, I dare ſay, only confound the Underſtanding of the Hearer, perplex his Memory, and ſend him away rather amazed than edified. It is that Light, Order, and Conſiſtency of Parts, and that Unity of Deſign running thro' the whole, which give a *Body* to Diſcourſes, nay, and a *Soul* too. Without theſe they are a dead Carcaſe, a formleſs and inſipid Maſs, uninſtructive, unanimating, and uſeleſs.

It muſt be granted, ſaid AGORETES, that a Diſcourſe, which has no determined Deſign, and keeps no regular Method, muſt be a very unedifying and inſignificant Performance: but may not the ordinary way of explaining a Text or Subject, and branching it out into its ſeveral Diviſions and Subdiviſions, and then winding up the whole with proper Inferences, anſwer equally well all the Purpoſes you mean to ſerve by *your* Method, fully inſtruct the Hearer, afford him proper reſting Places for his Memory, and give him a Clue to conduct him whitherſoever you intend to lead him?

Thoſe methodical Diſtributions you talk of, ſaid THEODORUS, may poſſibly be Helps to the weak Memory, and the weaker Judgment of the Preacher: but I am afraid, they rather diſtract the Views of the Hearers, and break down a Diſcourſe

Diſcourſe into a Parcel of ſeparate, independent, and minute Parts, which embaraſs and enfeeble one another, and deſtroy the Effect of the Whole. It is as if one, who was to give an *Anatomy* of the human Body, ſhould ſever the Head from the Trunk, lop off the Limbs, and divide the Whole into ſo many detached Pieces; the Reſult of which would be a Spectacle of Deformity and Horror. Whereas an able *Anatomiſt*, obſerving the Order of Nature, the juſt Diſtinctions, the apt Diſtributions, the admirable Junctures and Sympathy of the ſeveral Parts, and explaining the aſtoniſhing Uſes and Œconomy of the whole Structure, would give us a moſt beautiful Expoſition, equally curious and inſtructive. In like manner, a Maſter of the Art of Preaching, will diſtinguiſh where Nature has diſtinguiſhed, and divide where Nature has divided: he will obſerve the genuine Order and juſt Coherence of Things, how one Truth tallies with another, what Place every thing ought to have to give it the greateſt Force, and how the Whole ought to be ranged and combined, to produce the moſt powerful Effect. A Diſcourſe, executed in this manner, will not want the Grace of Order: the Tranſitions will be natural, the Connexions ſtrong; and the Diviſions, ariſing from the Subject, will aſſiſt, inſtead of diſtracting the Attention of the Hearer, and lead his Mind onward naturally, and almoſt irreſiſtibly, to the main Concluſion.

Whereas

Whereas the ſame dull unvaried Chime of returning Diviſions, makes his Attention flag, and produces that inſipid Languor, which is no Friend to true Perſuaſion, whatever it may be to ductile Credulity. On this account, perhaps it may be no Loſs to the Hearer, though he ſhould not all at once perceive the Drift of the Speaker, nor have every Step of the Progreſs, by which he is to be conducted to the Concluſion, marked out to him before-hand. If the Method be natural, yet ſomewhat hid from View, it will make the deeper Impreſſion, and the Reſult will ſtrike the Mind, with a Force heightened by Surprize.

I am now convinced, ſaid AGORETES, of the Neceſſity of Unity of Deſign, and Juſtneſs of Order, to give proper Weight to a Diſcourſe, and how inſufficient the ordinary Method of Diviſion is to anſwer that End. As you have likewiſe ſhewn us how the UNDERSTANDING is to be addreſſed, we ſhould now be glad to hear how you would proceed with the other Powers of our mixed Nature.

The next grand Principle, ſaid THEODORUS, to which the Preacher ought to addreſs himſelf with a peculiar Energy, I take to be the CONSCIENCE, or that *moral* Faculty of Perception, by which we diſtinguiſh between *Virtue* and *Vice*, are

are conſcious of *good* or *bad Order* within, and *approve* or *condemn* accordingly. To addreſs this Faculty to purpoſe, and to rouſe its inmoſt Feelings, is a Matter of infinite Delicacy and Moment. That Preacher who would ſpeak home to the *Conſciences* of Men, muſt lay open the human Heart, and trace its Windings, its Diſguiſes and Corruptions: he muſt unfold the Principles and Springs of human Conduct, remove from Actions their falſe Colourings, and diſtinguiſh Appearances from Realities: he muſt detect the various Biaſſes of Self-love and Self-deceit, expoſe the Struggles of interfering Paſſions, paint the ſeveral Virtues and Vices, in all the Beauty of one, and Deformity of the other, give to every Character its juſt Form and Boundaries, bring it to the Teſt of the great Rule of Life, and in ſhort, draw Voice and Paſſion from the Heart of Man; ſo that every one ſhall hear, ſee, and recognize himſelf, and ſtand acquitted or condemned in his own Breaſt, according as he deſerves one or the other.—*This* is to addreſs the *Conſcience*. And whoever can do this to purpoſe, has hit upon the true Maſter-Key of ſacred Eloquence, and poſſeſſes that powerful Art, by which he may alarm, controul, and govern the human Mind.

A Faculty immediately ſubordinate to this, and which muſt be employed as a main Inſtrument

ment to work upon it, is the IMAGINATION, that active and wonderful Power, which preſents to us the various Images of Things, and inveſts them with the mighty Force they have to charm or frighten, to attract our Admiration, or excite our Averſion. It muſt therefore be no mean Part of the Preacher's Buſineſs to apply himſelf to this noble Faculty, by laying proper Materials before it, combining ſtrong Images, ſelecting thoſe Circumſtances, which are moſt adapted to impreſs the Mind, and to ſhew things as it were *preſent* to its very Senſe, exhibiting natural and moving Pictures of Life and Manners, employing bold Sentiments and glowing Figures, animating the Whole with ſuch Strength and Spirit, and adorning it with ſuch Elegance and Grace, both in his Diction and Manner, as are fitteſt to allure, to ſeize, and tranſport the Hearers.

The Art you talk of, ſaid AGORETES, ſeems to be of wide Extent, and of great Difficulty in the Execution: but ſhould a Preacher indulge to the Flights of Fancy, which you appear to recommend, is there no danger of his loſing himſelf in thoſe airy Regions which terminate in Chimera, of his quitting the Simplicity, or debaſing the Dignity, of ſuch Compoſitions by an Affectation of too much Ornament, and appearing to lay Baits for catching the *Imagination*, rather than to offer Arguments for convincing the

the *Judgment?* Would it not, therefore, be better to keep to the more plain and ſafe Road of common Senſe and ſober Reaſoning?

I frankly acknowledge, ſaid THEODORUS, there is abundance of Danger in the wild Excurſions of an ungoverned Fancy; and perhaps it is no eaſy Matter to rein it well: but ſhould we forbid the Preacher the Uſe of ſo efficacious an Engine, we ſhould deprive him of a main Inſtrument of Perſuaſion, and hardly leave him any thing to move the *Paſſions*, which are however the great and immediate Springs of Actions. *Man* is too liſtleſs and lazy a Creature, to be actuated by cool Views of Intereſt, or dry Speculations concerning his Duty and Happineſs. One who is ſuch a Dupe to his Pleaſures, and who is always engaged in ſome preſent Purſuit, which engroſſes all his Thought and Care, needs any powerful Motives to make him quit the Chace, very intereſting Views to win his Attention, and very convincing Reaſons to allure him to a different Courſe. Objects which are remote from Senſe and Matter, as *moral* and *divine* Truths are, muſt be brought near the Mind, and rendered palpable and familiar to it, by the Beauty or Strength of Imagery: Objects diſtant as to Time and Place, can only have that Diſtance leſſened, by being repreſented in ſuch a lively and ſenſible manner, as to appear almoſt preſent

preſent to the Mind. But how is this to be done, without borrowing all the Lights and Colouring which a bright and glowing Fancy can beſtow; without giving a Body to our Conceptions, by ſtriking Alluſions, Compariſons, and Repreſentations; in ſhort, without making the Imagination ſubſervient to Reaſon and Judgment? It is therefore by natural and animated Pictures of *Good* and *Evil*, *Virtue* and *Vice*, *Heaven* and *Hell*, and all thoſe other awful and momentous Topics which Religion affords, that the Imagination is to be rouſed, and the various Affections of our Nature intereſted. It is thus our Admiration and Love are to be kindled, our Averſion and Indignation raiſed, our Hopes and Fears awakened, our Joy and Sorrow, our Sympathy, and other Paſſions, excited. In doing this, there will be both Neceſſity and Scope for all the bold, the tender, the ſublime, and the pathetic Figures, which have been employed, or recommended, by the greateſt Maſters of Eloquence. Laſt of all, to ſet this whole Machinery a-going, and to make a Diſcourſe come home with full Weight on the Hearer's Mind, the Preacher muſt add the Majeſty and Harmony of *Sound*, with all the Strength and Propriety of *Action*; that the *Ear* and *Eye* may be fully ſatisfied, and concur to enforce the Authority of the Speaker, and to leave his Words as Stings in the Hearts of the Audience.——This, *Gentlemen*, I offer

you

you only as a ſhort and imperfect Sketch of the Preacher's Duty, or the Method of ſetting about the Inſtructions and Perſuaſion of Mankind. Your own Reflexions will eaſily ſuggeſt a thouſand Particulars on the Subject, which are ſcarce to be reduced to Rules, and are beſt learned from good Models, but above all from the *Practice* of the *Art*.

You have cut out plenty of Work for the Preacher, ſaid AGORETES, and none of the eaſieſt: but pray, *Sir*, how ſhall we know, whether he has ſucceeded in the Taſk you have aſſigned; or by what Teſt ſhall an indifferent Perſon judge of the Excellence of a Sermon?

An able *Judge*, replied THEODORUS, will naturally form his Opinion, by the internal Characters it bears; and an able *Performer*, and therefore of courſe an impartial one, will ſcrutinize his Compoſition by thoſe Characters, ſome of which we have already given: but the Generality may, and often will, judge of the Merit of Sermons, by Marks more obvious, and perhaps no leſs ſure; I mean the Effects, which they produce upon the Hearers. The beſt Effects can be none other than thoſe, in which the End of the Art is accompliſhed; *viz.* the Conviction and Reformation of the Hearers. But as theſe Effects are not ſo apparent at preſent, and require

a conſiderable Length of Time to determine their Reality, there are other immediate, and more viſible Symptoms, by which we may judge of the Excellence of the Performance, and prognoſticate well concerning the good Impreſſions that are likely to follow, or may reaſonably be expected. If, for inſtance, the Sermon caſt the Hearers into a deep attentive Silence, ſo that they ſeem to hang upon the Speaker's Lips, and wait every new Period, with a watchful and ſtill Suſpence, which is an higher Mark of their Approbation, than the loudeſt Teſtimonies of Voice or Hands; if they are ſo totally engroſſed by the Matter and Sentiments of the Speaker, as to be quite regardleſs of his Manner; if the unaffected involuntary Groan, or Sigh, burſt from their labouring Breaſts, or the ſilent Tear trickle from the recollected Eye; if they are rather alarmed, impreſſed, and agitated with the Truth and Weight of the Things ſaid, than taken with their Fineneſs and Beauty; if they loſe ſight of the Speaker, and have no Leiſure to admire his Art, or praiſe his Wit and Eloquence; if they go away with a ſerious, yet pleaſed Countenance, breathing the Air of a modeſt Triumph, ariſing from a good Conſcience, or with pale down caſt Looks, like Perſons deeply affected with what they have heard, and ſtrongly reſolved to canvaſs their own Heart, and reform their Life; and if, inſtead of hurrying into Company,

and the Diſſipation of the World, they run into Solitude, grow fond of Devotion, become leſs apt to indulge to the Levity of ordinary Converſation, and in ſhort, appear with more Gravity and Dignity of Deportment; I ſay, if Sermons operate in this manner on the Hearers, then may we aſcribe to them genuine Merit, and acknowledge the Preacher a Maſter of his Art, a Workman who need not be aſhamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

You put me in mind, ſaid AGORETES, of a notable Philoſopher and Orator, of whom I have read ſomewhere; I think his Name was RUFUS, who uſed to ſay to his Auditory, "if you have "Leiſure to commend me, I ſay nothing to the "Purpoſe." Therefore he ſpoke with ſuch Strength and Majeſty, as awed and ſhook them; and each Perſon who heard him, thought himſelf arraigned, impeached, condemned; ſo feelingly did he expoſe, and ſo artfully did he reprove, their Vices. I have heard it ſaid, that a Philoſopher's School is, or ſhould be, an *Infirmary* or *Hoſpital*. How much more properly ought it to be ſaid ſo of the Pulpit, or the Church? People are ſuppoſed to have come thither lame, ſick, and diſeaſed, and therefore muſt go out from thence, not pleaſed, but pained, as not being quite reſtored to Health and Vigour.

Your Obſervation is very juſt, and the Simile tallies admirably, ſaid THEODORUS; for a Preacher is a profeſſed ſpiritual *Phyſician*, and his Hearers are his *Patients*. Therefore when he convinces them that they have need of him, he is then in a fair way to perſuade them. Are the Hearers in an Agony about themſelves; are they ready to confeſs that the Speaker hit their Failings, pierced them to the quick, and that they muſt no more do ſuch things: *that* Speaker is a Phyſician indeed. AUSTIN tells us, that whilſt he raiſed only the Acclamations of his Audience, he expected no good from them; but when he drew Tears, he entertained Hopes of their Reformation; and the Event anſwered his Hopes. As ſoon, however, as he perceived them ſink from their loud and noiſy, into a more thorough, though ſilent, Applauſe; he dropt his premeditated Diſcourſe, and ſtruck in with the riſing, and more promiſing, Paſſion. When PERE DE LINGINDES came down from the Pulpit, the Aſtoniſhment and Compunction of his Hearers, impoſed on them a deep Silence: they roſe up with pale Looks, and down-caſt Eyes, and went out of Church moved and penſive, without ſpeaking a Word. I remember likewiſe to have read of a noted *Capuchin* Preacher, one PHILIP DE NARNY, who preached at *Rome* before GREGORY the XVth, concerning Non-

Non-reſidence, with ſuch Force and Eloquence, that thirty Biſhops fled next Day to their reſpective Dioceſes. You well know, *Gentlemen*, the wonderful Command DEMOSTHENES had over the Minds of his Audience; and that the ordinary Effects of his Harangues did not evaporate into empty Praiſes, but appeared in immediate Reſolutions, and wholeſome Decrees. It is by ſuch Symptoms then as theſe, that I would have us to judge of the Art of the Preacher, and the Excellence of his Performances.

The Teſts you have propoſed, ſaid AGORETES, are, I believe, the very beſt, and ſhew the Difficulty, as well as the Perfection of the Art. But pray, *Sir*, how muſt one be qualified, in order to reach this Perfection?

Perhaps it is impoſſible, replied THEODORUS, to attain to the *Perfection* of the Art: *he* is the beſt Artiſt who comes the neareſt to it, and labours under the feweſt Imperfections. I remember you aſked me before, concerning the Qualifications neceſſary to a Preacher. To enumerate them all would, perhaps, be a difficult Taſk, where ſo many are required; but it is no hard matter to point out ſome of the principal.

Oblige us then, ſaid I, with ſome of theſe.

A Preacher's firſt and ſupreme Quality, ſaid THEODORUS, that which muſt give Life and Vigour to his Compoſitions, and juſt Scope to all his Talents, lies in his being a GOOD Man, I mean a Lover of GOD, and a Friend of Men. A Preacher who has not felt the Power, and imbibed the Spirit of *Chriſtianity*, is the moſt unfit Perſon in the World, to teach and recommend it to others. *Chriſtianity* is not ſo much a bare Syſtem of *Doctrines*, or of *Rules*, as an Inſtitution of *Life*, a Diſcipline of the *Heart* and its *Affections*, a vital and vivifying *Spirit*, a Ray of Light, ſent down from the Father of Lights, to illuminate a benighted World, and to conduct wandering Mortals to a State of Perfection and Happineſs. He into whoſe Mind this all irradiating and all-quickening Light has not ſhone, is yet dark and dead; and whilſt he continues ſo himſelf, how can he enlighten or vivify others?

One, who has not put on JESUS, and aſſumed his humble and ſelf-denying Spirit, will preach himſelf, not CHRIST CRUCIFIED; he will ſeek his own things, not the things of others. Inſtead of ſtudying merely how to convince and reform Mankind, he will affect to *ſhine*, to draw the Attention of the Audience on himſelf, and to dazzle them with the Strength and Coherence

of

of his Reaſoning, the Brightneſs of his Sentiments, the Fineneſs of his Compoſition, and the Gracefulneſs of his Elocution. This Vanity and Ambition, ſo contrary to that Modeſty and Simplicity, which are particularly becoming and attractive in *Chriſtian* Preachers, are Vices that have been often charged, and ſometimes, I am afraid, with too much reaſon, on thoſe of that Order; and into which, it muſt be confeſſed, the very Profeſſion is apt, without due Caution, to betray them, eſpecially the younger ſort.

We ſhould be glad to hear, *Sir*, ſaid AGORETES, what thoſe Circumſtances are, attending this Profeſſion, which betray the Practitioners into theſe Vices, and render the oppoſite Virtues ſo peculiarly neceſſary to them.

I dare ſay, AGORETES, you muſt have often obſerved them yourſelf, replied THEODORUS. The very Character a Preacher aſſumes is an high one, no leſs than an INSTRUCTOR of Mankind. The ſuppoſed Sanctity of the Character, the Importance and Dignity of the Office, the magnificent Titles uſually annexed to it, are apt to fill thoſe who wear them, with high Notions of their own *perſonal* Importance and Diſtinction above the ordinary Rate of Men. Beſides, a *Pulpit* is a Place of extraordinary Eminence, in which Heads not duly poiſed, muſt naturally turn

giddy. *There* a Preacher, like a *Statue* placed in the Center of ſeveral Viſta's, ſtands expoſed in a full Light: every Eye meets in *him:* the Attention of the whole Audience is fixed on *him: he* is the *Director*, perhaps the *Mouth*, of all; and on *him* hangs the Entertainment and Satisfaction of all: their Paſſions are in *his* Hand, which he may controul at pleaſure, and he may lead the liſtening, and generally the ſequacious Croud, whitherſoever he chooſes. Now this Situation, and this Exerciſe, I take to be, of all others, the moſt nouriſhing, and even inflaming, to human Pride. For they turn the Mind of the Preacher often, and very naturally, on himſelf. His own Sentiments and Geſtures, the various Looks and Emotions of the Hearers, give him back the Image of himſelf; and as Vanity generally interprets thoſe in the moſt favourable way, the reflected Image borrows new Charms in every Reflexion. Is it any wonder then, if in his Cloſet he is ever and anon figuring to himſelf, how this and the other Sentiment will be admired, and how the whole Production will be applauded; if when he delivers it he conſtrue every Mark of the Hearer's Approbation, or even Sufferance, into Admiration and Applauſe, and if when he returns home, he review the whole Scene with ſecret Tranſport, and re-enjoy the Raptures he gave and received? Is it eaſy for the Preacher often to go over ſuch Scenes, and not

not to conceive big Ideas of his own Importance, and not to give way to thoſe natural Overflowings of Vanity, which are apt to break in upon a Mind not properly guarded againſt them?

If, therefore, Self-admiration ſhall happen to riſe in ſuch Circumſtances, as moſt certainly it will, what ſhall bring the Mind down from its Flights? Or if the real Applauſe of others ſhall concenter all his Thoughts on himſelf, and his own Reputation, and make him loſe ſight of the Intereſt of his Audience, what ſhall wake him from the ſweet Delirium, into Sobriety of Thought, and ſtrict Attention to the End of his Office? For my part, I know no Antidote, no Security againſt ſuch certain Dangers, but the Humility and Self-denial which true *Chriſtianity* inſpires. Therefore I do not ſee how a Preacher, who has not been thoroughly tutored and principled in the School of his divine Maſter, can poſſibly defend himſelf againſt thoſe prevailing Infirmities of human Nature, and the Force of ſuch ſtrong Temptations; but muſt inevitably fall into an abandoned Conceit of his own Merit, or a mean Paſſion for Popularity, thoſe fatal Rocks on which ſo many Preachers ſplit, and by that means loſe the real Dignity of their Character, and often their Proſpect of Succeſs.

But ſuppoſing theſe Paſſions much ſubdued, there is another, and perhaps no leſs conſiderable, Danger, to which the Generality of Preachers are expoſed, and againſt which they had need to be armed with a very elevated and heavenly Temper, ſuch as inſpired the Breaſt of their great Maſter. The mean Appointments of many of the inferiour Clergy, and the conſequent Neceſſities in which they and their Families are involved, prove too often ſtrong Temptations to them to flatter the Vices, and become Tools to the Paſſions of People of Rank and Fortune, who have it in their power to promote them, and ſerve their Children. Such is the almoſt unavoidable Infirmity of human Nature, that a Preacher who cannot brook Obſcurity, or be reconciled to Poverty, and his Maſter's *Croſs*, will often chooſe to ſpeak ſmooth things, when harſh would ſhock his Audience, will palliate Faults, when he cannot entirely overlook them, affect to recommend popular Opinions, which in his Conſcience he diſapproves and ſeek to pleaſe a Taſte which he ought to correct, or if he cannot correct, at leaſt to condemn. Suppoſing him, therefore, to depend either on his Audience, or on ſome who belong to it, for his preſent Subſiſtence, or future Preferment, he muſt be much raiſed above the World, and the more minute Conſiderations of Intereſt and Popularity, to maintain a proper

Freedom

Freedom and Independence of Spirit, to dare to pull Iniquity from its high Places, to ſtem the general Torrent of Corruption, to brand notorious and mighty Offenders, to attack fatal yet favourite Opinions, and purſue Vice through its ſecret Windings, as well as its more open Walks, with a bold and unrelenting Indignation. Now to be able to incur the Reſentment of the Great, to deſpiſe the Frowns as well as Smiles of the People, to riſk preſent Advantages, and to give up future Proſpects of Wealth and Honour for one's ſelf and one's Family, and to be willing to ſhake Hands with Obſcurity, Indigence, and Contempt, are ſuch hardy and heroic Virtues, as I fear are to be found with but a few, yet are obviouſly neceſſary, and highly ornamental, to the whole Order. And ſurely they take deepeſt Root, and flouriſh beſt, in the Chriſtian Nurſery, under the Protection and Culture of that mild and divine Hero, who practiſed them in perfection.

Though a Preacher ought, no doubt, to have a Spirit above the World, and entirely reſigned to that humble Lot which generally falls to his Share, yet I hope, *Sir*, ſaid AGORETES, he may have a due Reſpect to temporal Advantages, to his Fortune, Reputation, and Advancement in Life. A ſtrong regard to theſe, ſeems to be very cloſely warped with the human Conſtitu-

tion: Prudence, I ſhould think, not only allows, but requires that Regard; and a Deſire of more extenſive Uſefulneſs concurs to recommend it.

I hardly expect, replied THEODORUS, *angelic* Strains of Piety or Virtue from Preachers of the moſt exalted Minds: even thoſe of the fineſt Compoſition, are ſtill but *Men*; and after their higheſt Flights, muſt be content to deſcend to the ordinary Sphere of human Life. Whilſt I venture to recommend to a Preacher a noble Diſengagement from the World, I neither expect, nor deſire, that he ſhould be inſenſible of the Wants of Life, or diveſt himſelf of the innocent Paſſions of Humanity. I am ſo conſcious myſelf of the Infirmities of human Virtue, that I would rather chooſe to call in every allowable and prudential Aid, that may ariſe from the Frame and State of our Nature in general, or the peculiar Circumſtances of one's Lot, to ſhore it up, and protect it againſt the many ſeveral Trials to which it is expoſed. But ſtill, my Friend, I look for a genuine Strain of *Chriſtian* Virtue from a *Chriſtian* Preacher. I expect he ſhould be entirely devoted to the Service, and in ſome good meaſure governed by the Spirit of his divine Maſter. He ought frequently to ſteal away from Company, and diſentangling himſelf from the Ceremonial of Life, caſting off its Cares, and ſilencing its Paſſions, to go into the Preſence

Preſence of GOD; that, by means of ſuch Approaches he may wear away that earthen Ruſt, with which the World encruſts the Soul, feed the pure Flame of Devotion, and by borrowing one Ray of the *Divinity* after another, gradually brighten up into an heavenly and immortal Creature. A Preacher who converſes much with his GOD and *Saviour*, who aſpires daily after Heaven, that is the *Perfection* of Wiſdom and Virtue, and pants for the Immortality of both, will know how to uſe the World, without over-rating it: he will enjoy the Pleaſures of Health and Society, without abuſing them; and whilſt he preſerves a noble Indifference of Mind, with regard to the Acquiſitions of Fame or Fortune, will make both ſubſervient to the important Ends of his Function. You know, *Gentlemen*, how much the ſoundeſt of the ancient Philoſophers required, as well as recommended, a previous Courſe of Trial and Preparation, before they admitted their Scholars, or thought them fit to be admitted, to a Participation of the more ſublime Myſteries of Science. What Compoſure of Mind and Paſſion, what Diſcipline of Silence and Retirement, what Diſengagement from Senſe and the World, what Purity of Heart and Manners, were deemed neceſſary to qualify them for being let into the *Arcana*, the fundamental Principles of their Philoſophy? Now as the *Chriſtian* Inſtitution is only a more refined Species of Philoſophy, a more efficacious

efficacious Art of purging the Soul from the Dregs of Senſe and Paſſion, and reuniting it to Truth, Reaſon, and Virtue, and by conſequence to the *Divinity*; as JESUS CHRIST is the Author of this *divine Philoſophy*, and our great *Myſtagogue* to introduce us into the *Holy of Holies*, and to impart the auguſt Myſteries of Faith; he muſt certainly expect of all his Diſciples, and particularly require of thoſe who are to miniſter to others, a more than ordinary Refinement and Simplicity of Manners. A Man muſt have converſed much with JESUS, muſt have long ſtudied his Maxims, and been formed after his holy and ſelf-denying Spirit, before he can thoroughly comprehend and reliſh his pure and heavenly Doctrines, or be qualified to teach them to others. What watchful Diſcipline of the Heart, what ſevere Correction of the Fancy, what Struggles with himſelf, what Contrition, what Penitence, what Humiliation muſt he have gone through; in order to conquer the Prejudices of Nature, and the Prepoſſeſſions of Habit, to reconcile him to the Myſteries of the *Croſs*, and to make him ſubmit chearfully to the Strictneſs of the *Goſpel-Law?* How often muſt he have ſat at the Feet of JESUS, before he learned to love the *Subtilty* of the *Man* in the *Simplicity* of the *Child*, the *Art* of the *Sceptic* in the *Candour* and *Ingenuity* of the *Believer?* I will be bold to ſay, that no Man can truly underſtand the *Dogmata*

of

of the *Chriſtian* Faith, whoſe Mind is ſwelled with Vanity, ſullied with Vice, or ſunk in Pleaſure. This divine Light cannot dwell amidſt ſuch impure Fumes. Whatever Principles of Knowledge, whatever Rules of Life, we pretend to communicate to others, will take a Tincture of the Veſſel through which they paſs. To the Clean all will be clean, and to the Impure all will be impure. The good Man, out of the Abundance of his Heart, will bring forth good Things, but a wicked Man evil Things. And ſurely it may be laid down as a Maxim, "That "as a *corrupt Heart* can dictate no Language, "that is not in ſome reſpect adulterated; ſo a "*corrupt Life* can enforce no Practice, but what "is of a Colour with itſelf."

Pray, *Sir*, ſaid AGORETES, may not a bad Man have Genius and Capacity enough, to repreſent Virtue in an engaging Dreſs, to ſhew in what it conſiſts, to deſcribe the Advantages which accompany it, and to recommend it with great Eloquence; in the ſame manner as a Man, who is no *Muſician*, may explain the Principles and Power of *Muſic*; or as one who is no *Painter*, may judge of *Painting*, and unfold the whole Myſtery of *Deſign?* And has he not a peculiar Advantage, when Vice is the Subject? *There* he muſt ſpeak like a *Maſter*, and from his own Experience deſcribe its Feelings, Energy, and various

various Diſguiſes, with natural, and therefore inimitable Strokes of Eloquence.

I am apt to believe, replied THEODORUS, that Virtue is an Art or Habit of Mind, which differs conſiderably from the others you mentioned. Thoſe may, no doubt, be underſtood by Perſons, who are no Performers themſelves: for a good *Eye* or *Ear* may make them Judges of *Deſign* and *Harmony*, though they have had neither Study nor Practice, to give them an *Hand*. But I much queſtion, whether *Virtue* can be *underſtood*, where it is not firſt *felt*. It is not ſo much a Point of Speculation, as a Matter of Practice, and ſeems properly to depend on the Soundneſs of the Heart, not on the Sagacity of the Head. It requires no peculiar Strain or Depth of Genius, to comprehend the Principles of this *practical* Art: a Man of the moſt ordinary Size of Underſtanding, may be as knowing here, as one of the largeſt. A certain Simplicity, or Plainneſs of Mind, bids fairer for apprehending and reliſhing it, than Artifice or Refinement. *Experience*, AGORETES, *Experience* is the great Teſt, the ſupreme Rule of Judgment in this Caſe. We do not allow one to be a Judge of Friendſhip, who never felt the friendly Sympathy; or a mere Ruſtic to decide concerning the Decorums of Behaviour. And ſhall we allow a Man of depraved Sentiments, and a rotten Heart,

to

to be fit to judge, or ſpeak with Propriety, of the pureſt Emanations of a Mind, Truth, Candour, Goodneſs, thoſe fair Forms of Virtue, to which he feels no Reſemblance in himſelf? How can *he* underſtand that Harmony of Affections which is neceſſary to conſtitute the virtuous Character, who feels nothing but Diſcord among his own? With what Savour can *he* recommend Religion, who is a Stranger to thoſe exalted Sentiments it inſpires? With what Feeling can *he* ſpeak of the almighty Parent of the World, who never thought of Him with any Emotion of Rapture or Eſteem? How ſhall one, whoſe Heart was never warmed with a ſingle Spark of divine Love, impart that vital Flame to others? Whilſt he is conſcious of nothing but Diſorder and Deformity within, what Juſtice or Beauty can appear to him in the Conſtitution of his own Nature, or that of the Univerſe? If it be natural to judge of other Minds by our own, the immoral Preacher will aſcribe the ſame Selfiſhneſs and Diſhoneſty he feels in himſelf, to the whole Species. The moſt ſhining Characters in Life, will be eſteemed only a more artful kind of Villains, and the nobleſt human Qualities, reputed but mock Forms of Integrity, Honour, and Humanity. Where then can he trace Order in the Government of Nature, amidſt a Scene of ſuch Depravity; or how diſcover Regularity in the whole, when Diſtortion prevails in the chief

chief Work? And if he ſees or apprehends nothing fair and worthy, neither round him, nor above him, what Original remains, from which to copy the various Species of moral Excellence; what Fund, to ſupply him with great and elevated Sentiments, or from whence he can animate and enrich his Imagery?

But you ſaid, my Friend, that a wicked Man muſt be a judge in *Vice*, and therefore he can ſpeak of it like a Maſter. Doubtleſs. It is his own Province, and being a Maſter in Iniquity, he can reveal its manifold Myſteries, and give admirable Rules to his Pupils, how to make Proficiency in ſo hopeful a Trade. The original Concert of his own Mind is broken, and Confuſion and Riot introduced. No wonder then if he can paint feelingly the Havock which Paſſions let looſe muſt make, the Pangs and Agonies of a Mind at variance with itſelf, diſguſted with Nature, and hoſtile to Mankind. But pray, AGORETES, can he teach others how a broken Conſtitution is to be repaired, how diſordered Paſſions are to be calmed and moderated, how the governing Judgment and Taſte of Life is to be rectified, in ſhort, how internal Freedom and Self-command are to be reſtored? Therefore if the unhappy Patient gain nothing, by his Experience of the Power of Vice, but a Capacity of deſcribing more feelingly the Miſeries that accompany

pany it, without any Knowledge of the Method of Cure, the Truth of my Concluſion is ſtill more manifeſt, that the good Man alone can be an able and well-qualified Preacher.

But have we not ſeen, *Sir*, ſaid I, many Men who talked with great Pomp and Zeal of the Beauty of Virtue, of Integrity, Honour, and what not; and have we not heard others preach eloquently and pathetically of its Power and happy Effects, whom yet we knew to be falſe and worthleſs at bottom? Nay, do we not daily ſee many Men, who can declaim warmly in favour of certain Virtues, as Charity, Humility, and Contempt of the World, who yet are notorious for the oppoſite Vices? What Connexion then is there between *Speaking* or *Preaching*, and *Doing* well?

It muſt be confeſſed, ſaid THEODORUS, that the Corruption of the Heart does not deſtroy, however it may impair, the natural Powers of the Underſtanding, nor efface the Knowledge a Man has acquired. Nay, the greateſt Villains have had ſometimes the higheſt Tones of Action, and an infinite deal of Eloquence and Addreſs. For the ſame Fire of Genius, and Strength of Mind, which fit a Man for being an Hero in Virtue, qualify him likewiſe for being a Giant in Vice. A vicious Man may, no doubt, know the

the Theory of the Paſſions, and the ſeveral ways of addreſſing to them. He may be acquainted with the Powers of Rhetoric, and be able to embelliſh even a moral Subject in a ſprightly and fanciful manner: but then, wanting a good and honeſt Heart, he wants the Life and Soul of all. Conſcious of his own Hollowneſs and Falſehood, I do not ſee how he can praiſe, or even talk of Virtue, with that Confidence and Boldneſs, with which an Advocate for it ought. Can *he* paint Virtue with Expreſſion and Majeſty, who beholds her with a Mixture of Averſion and Remorſe; or recommend her with real Warmth to others, who pines at his own Loſs; or deſcribe with proper Life the Raptures ſhe beſtows, to which he is an entire Stranger?

As is a Man's internal Character and Taſte, ſuch will his Sentiments and Conduct be. For from what other Fund does he think, ſpeak, and act? If his Taſte be vitiated, his Sentiments and Language will ſavour ſome-how of that inward Corruption; and his Conduct and Manners will betray, as well as partake of, the Depravity of his Heart. Whereas if he is conſcious of native Honour and Integrity, his Sentiments will be great and worthy, his Language animated and clear; and every Part of his Behaviour will diſcloſe the Rectitude of his Mind, and appear with that Dignity which is the natural Attendant of Good-

Goodneſs.——But ſuppoſing the bad Man endowed with ſuperiour Talents of Reaſon, Fancy, and Elocution, that his moral Senſe is not quite depraved, and that being aware of the fatal Influence of Vice upon Society, and of its dangerous Conſequence to one's Reputation, he can counterfeit an high Eſteem for Virtue, and paint its Power and Effects in ſtrong Colours; yet the Preſumption which his Hearers have, that he is deſtitute of all Pretenſions to it, will leaven his fineſt Compoſitions, and throw an unſurmountable Bar in the Way of their Succeſs. For I doubt not, *Gentlemen*, but you have often obſerved how wonderfully the Mind is pleaſed with tracing Similitudes, and making Compariſons between Objects which have often little Connexion, or Affinity to each other. Thus we not only compare the Picture with the *Original*, but ſometimes with the *Painter* too; at leaſt in *moral* Painting, as in drawing Characters, and deſcribing Virtues and Vices. Let any Teacher then undertake to delineate a Character morally excellent, we do not ſtop at inquiring whether it is juſt, or conformable to the Idea we have of that particular Species of moral Excellence; as we would do with regard to a common Piece of Painting: but we naturally go on to make Compariſons between the *Picture* and the *Painter*: we are curious to know from what Fund of Senſe and Manners he draws, and are impatient to trace

trace the Connexion, if there be any, between the Life he *repreſents*, and that which he *practiſes*. If we find an Incongruity between theſe, it is ten to one but we are more ſhocked with that Deformity, than pleaſed with the Beauty of the Picture. The more ſplendidly Virtue is drawn by any Man, the more deeply will the Attention of the Audience be fixed on his Character; and the ſounder his Inſtructions are, they will only ſerve to make the Corruption of his Life the more glaring. The ſilliеſt Critic will take an ill-natured Pleaſure in obſerving the Inconſiſtency. The Unthinking will be ready to join with the vicious Part of the Audience in believing, that Virtue is a mere Name, ſince it has ſo little Effect upon a profeſſed Teacher of it. And as Men are more affected by Example than Inſtruction, they will be more prone to imitate the *Villain*, than to mind the *Preacher*. The Good will be ſcandalized, to ſee the Wretch's Life bely his Profeſſion, and the Vices he commits baffle the Effect of thoſe Doctrines which he preaches. His very Breath will appear infected by the Foulneſs and Rottenneſs that is within him, and the Subject itſelf ſeem polluted, coming through ſuch defiled Hands. Whereas, when a good Man opens his Mouth in the Cauſe of Virtue, we acknowledge him to be Maſter of his Subject, and pay a Deference to his Authority, as believing that he ſpeaks from ſure Experience.

rience. We are highly charmed, when we can diſcover a full Conformity between the Counſels and the Manners of our Teacher; when we perceive all his Addreſſes animated with a real Paſſion, and every Feature of Virtue which he draws, exhibited more ſtrongly in the Innocence and Goodneſs of his Life. His Words are pure and tranſparent, like his own Mind; and his honeſt Sentiments, though expreſſed in the moſt artleſs and ſimple Language, will move the Judicious more than the fineſt Turns of a ſtudied and artificial Eloquence. Even a common Subject will receive natural Graces from his Touch, becauſe of the Sincerity of his Meaning: but, when raiſing his Voice, he launches out into the higher Themes of Religion, the Love of GOD, and of Mankind, and diſplays theſe in all their Energy and Beauty, his Eloquence will riſe with the Grandeur of the Subject: his own Worth will add Weight to every Argument, give Dignity and Luſtre to his Countenance, Life and Expreſſion to his Action; and being deeply affected himſelf, he can hardly fail of affecting others. For of all the Forms which draw the Mind's Attention, *Virtue* is the lovelieſt; and of all the Pictures of this lovely Form, that which is copied warm from the *Life*, or from a *good Heart*, is the moſt engaging. For here, beſides the Beauty of the Picture, *Virtue* herſelf becomes *viſible*, as it were, in the Perſon of the Preacher;

and

and therefore, in conſequence of this joint Attraction, muſt allure and captivate an ingenuous Spirit, with a Force that is inexpreſſible. This lovely Form I ſpeak of, is grown ſo familiar to him in all her Aſpects and Attitudes, that he has an inward Teſt ſtill at hand, ready to aſſiſt him in making the proper Diſtinctions between Right and Wrong, Good and Ill; and is therefore qualified to mark with Preciſion the Characteriſtics of each. He cannot readily be impoſed on by a falſe Appearance of Virtue; whilſt every Feeling that ſtirs within him reflects its true Image, and not an Affection riſes which does not call up the fair Idea. Such a Speaker, when he makes the *Deity* his Theme, is in a manner tranſported beyond himſelf: for being poſſeſſed with the nobleſt Sentiments of the ſupreme Parent, formed into a near Reſemblance of his moral Attributes, and, to uſe the ſublime Language of an inſpired Author, "filled with all the Fulneſs of GOD," he can in ſome ſort copy out the *divine* Character from within, and will paint every Perfection which belongs to it, with ſuch Enthuſiaſm and Majeſty, as muſt not only command the Attention of all who hear him, but kindle in each ſuſceptible Mind the ſtrongeſt Fervour of Veneration and Love. In ſhort, it is he only who *feels* with Spirit, that can *paint* with Spirit; nor can any Man communicate a Paſſion to *others*, till he has firſt felt it *himſelf*. Therefore though

an artful Hypocrite may counterfeit the outward Appearances of Worth, he can never juſtly expreſs the inward Temper, nor inſpire others with Sentiments to which he is an utter Stranger. Something hollow and artificial will appear, ſome time or other, in his Manner of thinking, or expreſſing himſelf, that will ſhew the Force put upon Nature: it is almoſt impoſſible to carry on the Diſguiſe through Life: in ſome unguarded Hour the Maſk will fall off; or he will lay it aſide, when a ſuperior Bait from Intereſt or Paſſion bids him ſhew his Face; and when the *Knave* ſtands once detected, his Character is blown, and all his Eloquence and Succeſs gone with it, irretrievably gone.——

Here THEODORUS pauſed, and gave AGORETES room to ſay, It is very poſſible, *Sir*, that we may be much miſtaken in the Eſtimate we make of Mens Characters, and may, through an Ignorance or Miſrepreſentation of Facts, reckon thoſe, who are pretty univerſally eſteemed good Preachers, bad Men; or we may be impoſed on by a ſpecious Parade of Eloquence, in thoſe of a ſuſpected Character. But be that as it will, we muſt certainly allow, that the good Man has great Advantages over the bad, in recommending Religion and Virtue. But pray, THEODORUS, what would you reckon the next Qualification of an able Preacher?

Another

Another eſſential and indiſpenſible Qualification, replied THEODORUS, is the Knowledge of human Nature, and of Life. The End of Preaching, which may be conſidered as the Art of *ſpiritual Medicine*, is to remove a vicious Temperament of Mind, to introduce a good one, and to confirm it by proper Applications and a right Regimen. But it is evident, that this End can never be attained, without a thorough Knowledge of the Heart of Man, of the Diſorders which ariſe there, and the various Appearances which theſe put on in the Characters of Men, and the Conduct of Life. In order to acquire this neceſſary Branch of Knowledge, the Paſſions muſt be accurately ſurveyed, becauſe theſe are the grand Springs of Action: the Motives and Cauſes which influence them, thoſe Species of Good and Ill which impel or reſtrain their Motions, their mutual Connexions and Dependance, together with thoſe Circumſtances and Relations in Life that contribute to their Growth or Decay, muſt be carefully ſtudied. For it is from a full and exact Detail of the Proceſs of Nature in the Structure and Operations of its leading Powers, that we muſt deduce the true *healing Art*, or the ſureſt Rules for reſtoring and perfecting the human Conſtitution. Therefore a Preacher muſt ſtudy his own Heart well, and be much converſant with Mankind, with thoſe eſpecially who reſign

the Health of their Souls to his Care, if he would practiſe with Succeſs upon ſuch nice Subjects.

By the way, I cannot help obſerving, that the Truth of this Maxim we were lately eſtabliſhing, I mean the Neceſſity of being a good Man, in order to be an able Preacher, appears ſtrongly in this Inſtance. For I ſcarce conceive how a bad Man can know his own Heart, or think juſtly on that prime Subject MAN, or *human Life*. How ſhould *he* know himſelf who finds no pleaſure in Self-Inſpection, who has no Sentiments worthy of his Attention, who dares not to aſcertain thoſe he has, without Shame, nor canvaſs his own Paſſions, for fear they ſhould turn like Furies upon him. But if any Accident or Calamity ſhould force him to turn his Eye inward, how is it poſſible for him to judge coolly of his Temper and Conduct, whilſt all is in a State of Confuſion and Violence within; Reaſon at War with Paſſion, and one Paſſion claſhing with another; new Impreſſions aſſaulting him from abroad, and freſh Wants importuning him at home? To be tolerably eaſy and pleaſed with himſelf in ſuch a caſe, he muſt either bribe his Judgment to palliate his Views, and diſguiſe his Inclinations, or debauch his Senſe of Right or Wrong, that he may reconcile his Conduct to that Standard. In either caſe, he muſt impoſe

upon himſelf as to the Scope and Tenor of his Actions, and continue as ignorant of his real Character as ever. Beſides, how can *he* underſtand the true Meaſures of Life, when his own is a continued Piece of Incoherence, governed by no Rule but Fancy, and ever varying in its Ends, and the way of coming at them? How can *he* judge ſoundly of human Nature in general, who blunders in the moſt important Subject relating to it, his own Happineſs; who imagines that it is to be found in the Road to Vice, or the uncontrouled Indulgence of Appetite? How diſtorted muſt that Turn of Thought be, which fanſies that Health may conſiſt with a broken Conſtitution and diſordered Affection, and that we may enjoy ourſelves amidſt Sickneſs, Remorſe, and Pain? Whereas the good Man knows himſelf, being daily converſant with himſelf. He is encouraged to turn his Attention within, by the Conſciouſneſs of inward Rectitude: he watches over the various Turns of his own Humour, and obſerves the Play of the ſeveral Paſſions: therefore he cannot be a Stranger to the Order and Revolutions of the Affection, or to the Anatomy of human Nature. Having gone through the moral Diſcipline, and borne the Severities neceſſary for eſtabliſhing the virtuous Principle, he can beſt deſcribe the various Struggles of the Soul, give the moſt proper Rules for Self-correction, and point out the Road, by which Religion makes

makes its way into the Heart. His own Mind has been a Theatre, on which different Paſſions and Characters have been acted; and therefore he can eaſily give Speech and Action to theſe, when he repreſents them to others. Now he who can draw Voice and Accent from the Heart, make the Affections ſpeak their genuine Language, and in ſhort hold out as it were a Mirrour to us, in which we cannot avoid ſeeing ourſelves, has hit upon the true Art, not only of intereſting but perſuading us, and conſequently bids faireſt for being the moſt powerful and ſucceſsful Preacher.

You ſeem, Sir, ſaid AGORETES, in the laſt Part of your Diſcourſe, to have mentioned a very material Branch of the Preacher's Buſineſs: We ſhould be glad to hear it explained at more Length, and to know what are the beſt Methods for carrying on the Cure of diſeaſed Minds.

For my part, AGORETES, replied THEODORUS, I know no certain or univerſal *Recipe's* for the Recovery of mental Diſorders. After the utmoſt Care that Mortals can take of them, they muſt be left at laſt in the Hands of the *almighty Phyſician* of Souls, who knows their inmoſt Frame, and can apply ſovereign and infallible Remedies. Different Minds muſt be treated differently, according to their ſeveral Conſtitu-

tions. We ſhall, however, apply the *healing Art* the more ſucceſsfully, if we remember what is the immediate Cauſe of moſt Diſtempers that attack the human Conſtitution. Now by obſerving the various Complexions and Characters of Men, and analyſing the ſeveral Diſorders to which they are obnoxious, we ſhall find, that it is generally ſome miſtaken Opinion of *Right* and *Wrong*, of GOD or *Religion*, or the Admiration of ſome *partial*, and generally of ſome *external* Good, that miſleads and governs the Bulk of Mankind, and gives Riſe to all the irregular Paſſions which diſquiet their Minds, and to all the wild Diſorders which deform their Lives. Some falſe Species of *Good*, borrowing deluſive Colours from the fair and genuine Forms of *Virtue*, *Beauty*, or *Happineſs*, and having paſt into the Region of *Fancy*, unexamined and undiſtinguiſhed by the *Judgment*, firſt raiſes Admiration, then Paſſion; which, being ſucceeded by Choice, gives birth to Reſolution, and that iſſues in a wrong Conduct. For I can hardly think it compatible with the Conſtitution of human Nature, to purſue *Ill* as ſuch, or to take pleaſure in Deformity and Vice, unleſs under ſome Maſk of *Good*.

See, for inſtance, how the Caſe ſtands with reſpect to PLEASURE. It offers itſelf to Mankind in various Forms and Poſitions: But whatever

ever theſe are, it ſtill appears as a *natural*, or a *moral*, or a *mixed Good*. And when Men purſue any particular Species of it, they do it, either becauſe they think it more worthy and honourable, or greater in Quantity than any other, or becauſe being preſent and of eaſy Purchace, it fills the Eye more than thoſe which are future, and harder to come at; or over-balances, in their Account, the Pains and Inconveniencies conſequent to it. Now where ſo many Things muſt be taken into Conſideration, it is eaſy to ſee how poſſible it is for giddy, thoughtleſs, and fallible Men to be miſtaken in their Calculations. In order to ſet them right, when they are deceived by a wrong Choice, there will be need for all that Goodneſs of Heart, and Acquaintance with human Nature and Life, which we thought neceſſary to furniſh out a *Chriſtian* Orator. From theſe beſt of Sources he may draw the nobleſt Colouring, to paint the ſuperior Pleaſures of Religion, Purity, Friendſhip, and Humanity; and by confronting theſe with the inferior Kinds, ſhew the Meanneſs, Hollowneſs, and dire Effects of the laſt in the moſt convincing and lively Manner.

Again, if the Mind be upon the cooler Key of INTEREST, and be deceived by ſome ſordid Species of Advantage or Gain; then the true and laſting Good of Man is to be diſplayed;

and it muſt be made appear how far *that* is from lying in Riches, or Fame, or Pomp, or Power, or in any of thoſe external Acquiſitions which are purſued, with ſuch Contention and Ardour, by the Generality of Mankind. And here there will be large room for a juſt Calculation of the different Rates and Proportions, the various Mixtures and Abatements of *Good*, for ſtrong and affecting Pictures of Life, and the different Purſuits of Men, of their Conſequences, and the Cauſes of Happineſs and Miſery.

Let us next ſuppoſe, what is very poſſible, that our Patient, whoſe Diſorder we want to remove, is miſled by ſome partial View of VIRTUE itſelf. The Mind, whoſe Conceptions have not been ſufficiently opened, by being taught or accuſtomed to attend to one particular Appearance or Form of it, has been ſo captivated and engroſſed by *that*, as to deſpiſe, at leaſt to neglect other Views of it, equally intereſting, and far more noble. Thus, for inſtance, many place all Virtue in a certain Politeneſs and Decorum of Behaviour, which teaches a Man to model his outward Carriage, with an eaſy Accommodation to the Humours and Characters of others, without any Regard to the Temper of the Mind, or the Conduct of the Affections. Others make it to conſiſt in a ſcrupulous and delicate Senſe of Honour, or an elated Conſci-

ouſneſs

ouſneſs of one's own Rank, Fortune, Merit, or Dignity, which ſpurns at the meaner kinds of Vice, and cannot brook the leaſt Affront or Injury; but which can, without any Remorſe, trample on the moſt ſacred Laws of Religion, Juſtice, and Humanity. Some there are, who contract all Virtue to a cold, dry, rigorous Honeſty, that will do nothing actually unjuſt, violate no Promiſes, and break no Engagements, but will not exert one kind Affection, or do one generous Deed, though Miſery were to ſolicit it in the moſt importunate and piteous Shape. Others from a narrow View of public Good, think the Sum of Virtue compriſed in Zeal for a Sect or Party, and an entire Devotion to its Intereſts; which is often excluſive of Benevolence, nay, ſometimes of Juſtice to one's Country, and Mankind. This is generally a Source of the moſt inveterate Antipathies and cruel Feuds that happen among Men. Now as Virtue is ſo glaring and commanding an Object, even thoſe partial Aſpects of it muſt have a powerful Effect, and often produce very irregular and exceſſive Paſſions. In order to moderate and rectify theſe, the Mind muſt be gradually opened to larger Views: the more grand and elevated Forms of Goodneſs muſt be exhibited before it; our more extenſive Connexions, and higher Obligations, ſhewn; the Rank and Value of the ſeveral Virtues determined, the unhappy Conſequences of

a lame and partial Virtue pointed out, and what is principal and moſt excellent in each kind explained.

In fine, if the Patient is deluded by a falſe Species of RELIGION, whether that conſiſts of ſuperſtitious Fears, childiſh Ceremonies, a blind and furious Zeal for Opinions, extatic Impulſes, a total Receſs from the World, Monkiſh Auſterities, or even an aſſiduous and ſtrict Devotion, ſeparated from Practice, and an active Commerce with Mankind; a more genuine and excellent Form of Religion muſt be held up to View, and aſcertained to the miſtaken Votary, from the Conſtitution of Man, the Nature of GOD, the Revelations He has given, and the Inſtitutions He has appointed; and the Diſagreement of the falſe kinds with *theſe*, muſt be ſtrongly marked. The Objects about which Religion is converſant are of the vaſt and majeſtic kind, and therefore apt, unleſs they are guided by juſt and proportioned Views, to raiſe the moſt imperious and over-ſtrained Paſſions, ſuch as Bigotry, amazing Panics, and the wildeſt Sallies of Enthuſiaſm: therefore in order to cure theſe moſt dangerous ſpiritual Diſtempers, the Conſtitution of the Patient had need to be carefully ſtudied, and the Sources of thoſe Diſtempers nicely examined; whether they ariſe from narrow Conceptions of Religion, Miſtakes concerning the Character of GOD,

God, natural Melancholy, Diſappointments in Life, the Prejudices of Education, Aſſociations with other miſguided Votaries, or from whatever other Cauſes. By obſerving theſe accurately, the moſt proper Methods of Cure may be diſcovered. One thing in general is to be remarked of thoſe religious Paſſions, as well as of many others that prevail among Mankind, that it is beſt to ſet upon them indirectly, and by Sap, rather than Battery: as in ſome bodily Diſeaſes, let a Revulſion be made to another Part, and what is peccant be thrown off, by giving vent to the Paſſion in an innocent manner, and employing it upon a nobler Object. Thus that violent Zeal for mere Opinions and Forms, may be converted into a more juſtifiable Ardour for the fundamental Truths and important Duties of Religion: the ſlaviſh Dread of God into a filial Reverence; an Attachment to a Party, and Rancour againſt different Sects, into a more enlarged Benevolence, and a greater Severity againſt Vice, among whatever Denominations of Men it is to be found. But theſe mental Applications muſt be made and conducted with a very ſoft and tender Hand: Prejudices muſt be gradually unravelled: and Truth let into the Mind by ſlow and gentle Steps: for Men may be perſuaded and reaſoned out of their Errors and Vices; but they will not be ſcolded and beaten out of them.

It appears then, *Gentlemen*, by this Detail, that thoſe who are under the Influence or Dominion of any Vice, are deceived by ſome falſe Species or another, according to which they regulate their Character and Conduct; and that it muſt therefore be of the utmoſt Conſequence to expoſe that falſe Species, by ſhewing that the Opinion itſelf is ill-founded, or the Paſſion built upon it faulty, either in Exceſs or Defect; and to paint this Paſſion in all its Appearances and Forms ſo exactly, that no Man, who attends without Prejudice to the Picture, may miſtake his own Features. The Effect of ſuch a Delineation will be, that he muſt take part one way or other, and either approve or condemn himſelf. For hardly can any human Creature behold a juſt Repreſentation of his own Character with Indifference; therefore when one diſplays to him the Images of himſelf, and preſents him with his own Views, Sentiments, and Paſſions, he muſt either love or lothe the Draught. And this Affection or Averſion muſt be excited, in proportion to the Likeneſs of the Picture, and the Attention with which it is ſurveyed. This, I apprehend, is the firſt Step towards the Recovery of a Mind enſnared by Vice.——But it is eaſy to ſee that *he* muſt not be unacquainted with the human Heart, and the various Diſeaſes to which it is ſubject, and muſt be no mean Artiſt in

moral

moral Painting, who can thus make us paſs in review before ourſelves, reflect ſeriouſly on our own Diſpoſitions and Conduct, and by ſo doing, intereſt every ſenſible, ingenuous, and humane Principle about us.

I much fear, *Sir*, ſaid AGORETES, this Method which you propoſe, how juſt ſoever it may appear, is hardly practicable in Preaching. The Gravity and Solemnity of that, will ſcarce admit of ſuch *moral Painting*, ſuch Exhibitions of human Characters and Paſſions, or, in ſhort, thoſe minute Deſcriptions of the ſeveral Phantoms which delude Mankind into ſo many Mazes of Vice and Folly. But though it ſhould, I much doubt whether mere *Deſcription* will anſwer the End propoſed. To make Men know themſelves, and diſtinguiſh their own Faces, Perſons muſt be introduced, *acting*, and *ſpeaking*, ſuitably to their reſpective Characters; and theſe Characters muſt be marked with ſuch Truths and Expreſſions, as none may take them for what they are not. This, perhaps, can only be performed by the *Drama*, that faithful Mirror of Men and Manners. Whereas the Painting, which is conſiſtent with the Gravity of Preaching, will appear only faint Sketches, or general and unaffecting Delineations of this or the other Character and Diſpoſition; which, if beautifully turned, may indeed make the Hearer attend to what is ſaid,

but

but will hardly ſuggeſt to him his own Feelings and Paſſions, or accuſtom him to that uſeful Habit of Self-Inſpection. For who will think himſelf intereſted in the cold Definitions, and dry Deſcriptions, of a formal Preacher, let him define or deſcribe ever ſo well? From what other Cauſe ariſes that frequent Complaint of Preachers, that no Man applies what is ſpoken to *himſelf*, but every Man to his *Neighbour*?——And were they to attempt the *dramatic* way in Preaching, they would not only deſcend from the Dignity of their Character, but convert Preaching into an inconſiſtent Medley of Solemnity and Farce, quite remote from Nature, and unfit for the Purpoſes of Inſtruction.

Your Scruples, AGORETES, replied THEODORUS, are very ingenious, and ſhew that you are no Stranger to the Subject we are upon. No doubt the *Drama* has its Advantages, and can deſcend to the Correction of leſſer Enormities and Follies, which fall not within the Cognizance of the *Chair*. But that the laſt entirely excludes *Perſonating* or *Characterizing* Men and Manners in the trueſt Senſe, I cannot allow. It does not admit the Introduction of real Perſonages; and yet their Sentiments, Manners, and Language may be repreſented in *Narration*: the ambitious, the voluptuous, the covetous Man may be exhibited, and made to talk in character: the

the Maxims and Diſpoſitions of the Villain, the Bigot, the Enthuſiaſt, may be detected: the Hypocrite, the Formaliſt, the Self-deluded may have their Countenances plainly expoſed to view, and their various Arts of Falſehood and Self-deceit laid open; ſo that they ſhall be forced to *feel*, if they will not *confeſs* a Likeneſs, and to abhor the mean, the falſe, the odious Forms, which they have worn, whilſt they juſtify and approve their Contraries.

It muſt be confeſſed, however, that there is ſomething in the Genius and Style of Preaching peculiar to itſelf, and diſtinguiſhed from all other kinds of Compoſition. It is not ſo minute and particular as the *Drama*, nor ſo general and abſtracted as a *philoſophical Diſcourſe*, nor ſo looſe and declamatory as a *popular Harangue*. "It is "rather a ſober and ſerious, yet a moſt awake-"ning and pathetic Addreſs to the HEART of "Man, or to his *Reaſon*, *Imagination*, and *moral* "*Feelings*, accompanied with Circumſtances of "the greateſt Solemnity and Awe, being deli-"vered in a Place commonly regarded with re-"ligious Veneration, in the immediate Preſence "of the beſt and greateſt Being in the Univerſe, "and by Perſons of a ſuppoſed Sanctity of Cha-"racter, concerning Subjects which are gene-"rally believed by the Audience to affect their "higheſt Intereſts." In this Method of Addreſs,

a pointed and awful Appeal is lodged to the Conſcience; the inward Character, Principles, and Springs of Action are laid open to view; the habitual Tenour of one's Life is canvaſſed; the Mind is arraigned, interrogated, and tried, in the Preſence of GOD, and of one's Fellow-creatures, a Circumſtance which rouſes Attention, and adds not a little to the Solemnity of the Proceſs; and in conſequence of the Whole, the Sinner is condemned or acquitted, not by the Speaker only, but, which is of infinitely greater Moment, by a Sentence which he paſſes on *himſelf*. Who that has Eyes, or Ears, or any remaining Ingenuity of Mind, can ſtand by unconcerned and unmoved, whilſt this *Home-trial* is carrying on? And who can forbear recognizing himſelf, and making perſonal Application, whilſt the Workings of his own Mind are exhibited, his moſt natural Senſe and intimate Convictions appealed to, and he himſelf actually engaged as a Party in the Trial? If this be ſo, I fear, AGORETES, the Ground of that Complaint you mentioned as familiar to Preachers muſt be charged, not upon the Hearers, but on their Incapacity or Neglect who draw Characters which none can apply, and launch out into general Deſcriptions, and vague Obſervations, which have no Connexion with Life and Nature, and in which no one finds himſelf concerned.

Pray,

Pray, *Sir*, ſaid I, will you be ſo good as to explain to us, yet a little more particularly, how this Buſineſs of drawing Characters is to be managed, and how that kind of *moral Painting*, which is allowable in Preaching, is to be diſtinguiſhed from the other kinds of it.

There is without queſtion, aid THEODORUS, a ſingular Delicacy and Caution required in the Management of this Affair; and perhaps, like all the reſt of the Art, it is better learned by Practice than by any Rules. I ſhall, however, frankly tell you what occurs to me at preſent on the Subject.——I ſaid before, that the Method of Characterizing proper to Preaching, was not ſo minute and particular as the *Drama*, nor admitted of ſuch direct Imitation. There are peculiar Humours, Oddities of Character, and little Specks of human Folly, which become the *Stage* well enough, and furniſh out agreeable Portraits of ordinary Life. Theſe ſuit not the Genius of Preaching; nor even thoſe Draughts of rare and extraordinary Characters, which lie beyond the Reach of common Obſervation. Man muſt be painted more in the *Groſs*, according to his ordinary Size and Meaſures, and with thoſe more ſtriking Features and Proportions, in which he uſually appears, and which are obvious even to a vulgar Eye. Though our graver *Corrector* of Manners,

Manners, had need to know, the general Boundaries of Virtue and Vice, yet it is not neceſſary, that he ſhould be able to determine preciſely in every Caſe, where one ends, and the other begins. But he ſhould, I think, underſtand in the main, what Degree of Imperfection is, or is not, reconcileable with the *virtuous* Character, and what Meaſures of Virtue may be found where Vice has the aſcendant; ſo that whilſt he is exhibiting the Out-lines of both, the loweſt Degrees of Goodneſs may not be diſcouraged, nor the Vicious have their Indolence, or their Preſumption, fed with the View of any thing ſhort of real Virtue, or a prevailing Piety. To proceed, however, with the greater Caution in this Affair, the *moral* Painter muſt draw thoſe Contraſts and Alloys which are to be found in the ſame Character, thoſe Struggles of interfering Principles and Paſſions, which often ariſe in the Breaſts of good Men, but eſpecially of thoſe in whom the Seeds of Virtue are but juſt forming; the Defects which are obſervable in ſome Affections, and the Exceſſes of others; the frequent Variations of Characters in the ſame Perſon, owing to the different Circumſtances in which he is placed, and the Influence of different Principles which govern him in their turn. For there are few of a Character ſo ſteady and uniform, as not to differ often from themſelves. And nothing is more notorious, than that great Virtues

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are frequently allied to great Imperfections; and ſome of the fineſt Diſpoſitions do, by a native Vigour and Impetuoſity, run up ſometimes to the higheſt Exceſſes, as we ſee the richeſt Soils produce the rankeſt Weeds. Therefore, when the *virtuous* Character is not too much raiſed on one hand, nor the *vicious* too much ſunk on the other, but when the Features of each are marked with their proper Shades and Softenings, the Picture will have a much ſtronger Effect on every intelligent Spectator; becauſe it approaches nearer to the general Rate of Men, and to what we feel ourſelves in the common Run of Life.

But beſides thoſe Contraſts of Character in the ſame Individual, there are Diverſities in that of the ſame Claſs of Men, which ought to be nicely diſtinguiſhed; leſt Characters which are really diſtinct, be confounded by the Similarity of their Appearance. Thus there are Hypocrites of very different kinds: there are ſeveral Sorts of Superſtition, according to the Turn of the Temper, the different Aſpects of the *Deity*, and of Religion, or the various Circumſtances of Mens Education, Buſineſs, and Life. In ſhort, Selfiſhneſs, Ambition, the Love of Pleaſure, of Praiſe, and of Wealth, may appear in a Variety of Shapes, and form very different Characters, as they operate more or leſs powerfully; as they are influenced by the Mixture of other Paſſions,

or

or employ different Means to come at their reſpective Ends. Unleſs then this Diſtinction of Characters be maintained, and the Peculiarities of each, though reducible to the ſame general Claſs, be accurately marked, particular Characters may be over-charged, and diſcordant Features of different Perſons may be patched together, in ſuch a manner, that all real Likeneſs ſhall be loſt, and no Man be knowable either by himſelf, or by any body elſe. Such an uncertain and undiſtinguiſhed kind of *Limning* can anſwer no moral Purpoſe: it intereſts no particular Perſon, and leaves the Spectator juſt where it found him. How then is the Pencil to be guided, ſo as to mark the peculiar Colour of a particular Temper or Affection, and to preſent a full and diſtinct Image of any Character, without falling into that Minuteneſs and Nicety of Deſcription, which we thought was to be avoided?———This, I imagine, is to be done by tracing every Man's *predominant* Paſſion through his Life and Manners, not by diſcuſſing nicely, how his Paſſions are ranged with one another, or in what Proportions they are ballanced; but by exhibiting the Man entire and at full length, ſpeaking and acting in the View of all preſent. I would give a Plan of his Life, of his Principles, his Ends, and the general Courſe of his Actions: I would purſue the favourite Inclination through all its Doubles and Windings, ſhew how it exerts itſelf

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in Youth, and a more advanced Age, in Proſperity and Adverſity; what Forms and Diſguiſes it puts on in different Circumſtances and Relations, and by what Maxims it is governed in all theſe. I would particularly exhibit the Man in thoſe grand and intereſting Lights, in which the peculiar Turn of his Character, or Strength of his *ruling* Paſſion, appears moſt conſpicuous. And becauſe no Man is invariably guided by *one* Principle, I would take notice of thoſe ſubordinate and interfering Paſſions, that govern him by turns. If Nature is faithfully copied in ſuch a Detail as this, and the principal Lines of his Life expoſed clearly to view, I do not ſee how the Perſon or Perſons aimed at, and included in, ſuch a Character, can fail of diſtinguiſhing their own Faces, or forbear honeſtly juſtifying the Draught, or Charge, call it which you will. This, I think, is ſomething more than cold Deſcription, or looſe Obſervation; and if it is not Imitation in a *dramatic* Senſe, it is at leaſt an *hiſtoric Painting and characterizing* of Men and Manners; and if well executed, may fully anſwer the End of *moral* Delineation and Inſtruction. It differs, indeed, from *Hiſtory*, in not ſufficiently particularizing Facts and Circumſtances: nor is it the ſame with *Poetry*, which conſiſts chiefly of Fiction: yet by the Truth of its Repreſentations, it appeals to every Man's Experience of his own Conduct, and Obſervation

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of that of others. And this *moral Painting* of particular Characters, will both be better underſtood, and have a more powerful Effect, if Characters of an oppoſite kind are placed by them, as Foils, to ſet them in a ſtronger Light. Thus if over-againſt the ſelfiſh griping Miſer, we ſet the generous and diſintereſted Friend of Mankind, if we confront the haughty and double-minded Sinner with the humble and ſingle-hearted Chriſtian, the Lines of each Character will appear much brighter, and be more ſtrongly felt.

But beſides theſe particular Draughts now mentioned, there are more general Characters of Virtue and Vice, peculiar to certain Times, Ages, Ranks, Conditions, and other Circumſtances of Life, which muſt be carefully obſerved, and diſtinctly drawn by a profeſſed *Corrector* of Manners. Or if I may uſe the Words of an able Maſter in his own way, "Virtue muſt be ſhewn "her own Feature, Scorn her own Image, and "the very Age and Body of the preſent Time "his Form and Preſſure." Some Vices are faſhionable in certain Seaſons, and ſeem to dare the Attack of a public *Cenſor*, as ſheltering themſelves under ſome ſpecious Maſk of Virtue, or triumphing in the Number and Rank of Offenders. Theſe, if he would be faithful to his Truſt, he muſt drag forth into the Light, diveſt of their borrowed Colours, and brand with juſt

Infamy.

Infamy. But even here a diſcreet Delicacy is very neceſſary; and the Satire will be ſo much the more piercing and effectual, the more artfully it is couched, and the greater Mildneſs that is mixed with this Severity.

Again, there are certain Enormities, which ſeem to grow out of particular Profeſſions, and are the natural Product of ſome Periods and Situations of Life. Thus Fraud is peculiarly apt to enter into ſome Employments, Love of Gain into others: Pride and Statelineſs are the Attendants of ſome Conditions, Meanneſs and Servility of others. Againſt theſe the *Chriſtian* Orator is to point his Thunders: yet it ſhould be done with ſo cautious an Hand, as to appear to level at the Vices, not the Perſons or Reputations of Men.

But beſides this general Acquaintance with Characters, and the prevailing Corruptions of certain Times and Profeſſions, he who would wiſh to ſucceed in the preaching Art, had need to be no Stranger to the particular Characters and Manners of his Audience, or the People who are his immediate Pupils, that he may know how to rank them into their ſeveral Claſſes, and addreſs to them in a manner ſuitable to their reſpective Capacities and Tempers. He ſhould know not only the Size of their Underſtandings, but the Variety of their *moral* Bent and Complexion,

plexion, that he may copy exactly from the Life, paint ſuch Characters as they are acquainted with, apply thoſe Arguments which are proper to perſuade, and excite thoſe Convictions which are neceſſary to reform them. It is very evident that different *moral* Diſpoſitions muſt be treated in a different manner, juſt as various *bodily* Conſtitutions require different Applications. Sullen and ſtubborn Minds muſt be wrought upon by more harſh Methods, than the Gay and the Gentle: the Humble ſhould be encouraged, the Melancholy comforted, the Grounds of their Dejection tenderly canvaſſed and carefully obviated, and the Sources of true Joy opened: the lethargic Sinner muſt be awakened, and the haughty and preſumptuous one humbled and terrified. In ſhort, Hearers of every Rank and Character are to be diſtributed and applied to, according to their reſpective Genius, Tempers, Paſſions, and Foibles, if the public Teacher would play the Part either of a ſkilful *Phyſician* or an able *Painter*.

I ſhould think it no ill Method of enforcing theſe *moral Paintings*, and making the general Delineations more palpable and affecting, to ſelect from Scripture, or from proper Books of *Biography*, the moſt ſingular and ſtriking Characters of the virtuous or vicious kind, whoſe Hiſtory and Actions convey the moſt inſtructive

Leſſons, and are told with the moſt beautiful Simplicity. Such are thoſe of ABRAHAM, JOSEPH, JOB, MOSES, BALAAM, SAUL, DAVID, PETER, JUDAS, PAUL, and ſeveral others in holy Writ. Whatever Inſtructions are thus borrowed from Life, and whatever Models are drawn from thence, be it done in ever ſo plain and artleſs a manner, are the beſt adapted to touch the Heart of Man, and to ſet in motion every Power and Spring of Action.

But now, *Gentlemen*, how much ſoever I approve of this *characteriſtical* Method of Preaching, of which I have given you my Sentiments: I muſt frankly confeſs to you, that I do not believe either this or any other Method whatever, will be ſufficient, though ſupported with the utmoſt Force of human Eloquence, to produce real and laſting Reformation, unleſs the great Father of Spirits concur with a *divine* Energy, and transfuſe Life and Vigour into thoſe Pictures of the Heart and Manners. It is but too evident from Experience, that thouſands return from the juſteſt Repreſentations of the *Theatre*, *either without diſcerning* their own Follies, or being in the leaſt diſpoſed to mend them; and that as many more peruſe the fineſt Productions of *Poetry*, *Hiſtory*, and *Philoſophy*, without any Conviction or Concern. And we daily ſee, that higher kinds of Inſtruction are no leſs inſufficient; ſo that after

after the laſt Efforts of human Skill, we muſt have recourſe to a ſuperior Hand, to open the inmoſt Springs of the Soul, and to carry along every Sentiment and Paſſion with a Current of irreſiſtible Perſuaſion.

We are much obliged to you, *Sir*, ſaid AGORETES, for having ſatisfied us ſo fully upon a ſubject that had ſo much engaged our Curioſity, and which, as eſſential as it is to the Buſineſs of Preaching, ſeems to be very little minded now-a-days. But pray, *Sir*, does this *moral Painting* you talk of conſtitute the whole of Preaching? Or is it not connected with other Methods of Addreſs, which at once ſupport and ſtrengthen it?

The Method I have been recommending, ſaid THEODORUS, is far from being the Whole of Preaching: there are others alike Important, and from which that Method borrows its moſt powerful Reinforcements. Therefore, I was likewiſe to have mentioned theſe: for it would require more time, than I am now maſter of, to do more than mention them, or to ſpeak of them as their Importance and Dignity deſerve —It is from REVEALED RELIGION as diſplayed to us in the ſacred Writings, and thoſe grand Views which it opens of the Origin, Connexions, and Obligations of *Man*, as well as thoſe Diſcoveries it contains relating to GOD, to Providence, and

a future Life, that the peculiar Tenour and Efficacy of Preaching are to be derived. There the vaſt and complicated Scheme of the divine Adminiſtration, as it reſpects Mankind, is unfolded in a plain and ſimple, yet a moſt marvellous and affecting Story of its principal Periods and Revolutions, from its firſt Opening to its laſt Reſult. The ſeveral States of Man, his original Rectitude, his Degradation, and his final Reſtoration, are all diſtinctly deſcribed. The principal Agent by whom, and the ſeveral Steps by which, the great Plan of *Redemption* was carried on from the Beginning, is gradually advanced, and will be at laſt accompliſhed in the Reſtitution of the Sons of GOD, are exhibited at full length. Now, I apprehend, it will be a main Part of the Buſineſs of a *chriſtian* Preacher, to trace thoſe glorious Deſigns of Wiſdom, Juſtice, and Mercy, which appear in the divine Diſpenſations, to vindicate the Ways of Providence, as to the Choice of the Inſtruments that have been employed, and the Methods that have been taken, to execute theſe Deſigns, and particularly to explain what has been done by the great *Meſſenger* and *Miniſter* of *Heaven*, and what muſt be done by his Followers in concurrence with the Intentions of the benevolent Father and Ruler of all; in a word, to ſhew how Purity and Love are to be re-eſtabliſhed in the Hearts of Men, and Order and Happineſs in the Creation of GOD. Theſe

ſublime and intereſting Subjects will afford a Preacher the moſt admirable Topics of Perſuaſion, and the moſt powerful Machinery to affect and raiſe the human Mind. They will enable him to preſent to the Hearer the moſt majeſtic and commanding Exhibitions of the *Deity*, to diſplay in the nobleſt Lights the various Relations which he bears to us, and the extenſive Connexions which he has formed between us and other Beings; to point out, in conſequence of thoſe Views, the moſt auguſt and amiable Forms of Religion and Virtue; and, laſt of all, to open the moſt enlarged and ſtriking Proſpects of an inviſible and eternal World, and of the Solemnity and Grandeur of thoſe Scenes that will bring on the general Conſummation. Theſe, AGORETES, *theſe* are Topics the niceſt adapted of any in the whole Compaſs of Nature to rouſe and fix the Attention of Mankind, to awaken and exalt their Reaſon, to alarm their Conſcience, to ſeize their Imagination, to excite their Hopes and their Fears, and, by conſequence, to reclaim them from Impiety and Vice to the Love and Practice of univerſal Righteouſneſs. When thoſe affecting Topics are employed as Enforcements to the aforeſaid Repreſentations of Virtue and Vice, in the Characters of particular Perſons, theſe will appear of vaſtly greater Moment, with regard as well to our preſent, as to our future Happineſs. Our inward Senſe and Feelings, relating to our

Conduct, will be wonderfully quickened, when *it* is viewed in a Connexion with *Deity*, an all-ſuperintending Providence, the Plan of our Recovery, the awful Proceſs of a future Judgment, and an Immortality of Happineſs and Miſery. And this inward Senſe, thus enlivened by ſuch a Combination of grand and ſolemn Views, will raiſe quite other Affections, and inſpire more active and vigorous Reſolutions than the moſt elaborate Reaſonings, and beautiful Paintings, could do without them. On theſe Accounts, as well as on many others, a *Chriſtian* Orator had need to be much converſant with his *Bible*, as the great Treaſury of divine Knowledge and Wiſdom, from which he may draw the ſublimeſt Lights, the pureſt moral Precepts, the moſt ſimple and lofty Repreſentations, the richeſt Variety of Characters, and the moſt natural and affecting Eloquence.

You have ſuggeſted ample Materials, *Sir*, ſaid I, to furniſh out a never-failing Fund of Preaching to the brighteſt Genius: but how theſe are to be digeſted, ranged, and ſet off, and in what Manner the whole ſhould be delivered, ſo as to produce the ſtrongeſt and moſt laſting Effect, we are ſtill to learn. Could you condeſcend to give us a few Hints on this Head likewiſe, you would complete our Obligations.

In theſe Points, *Gentlemen*, replied THEODORUS ſmiling, your own Senſe of what is decent, orderly and fit, and your Experience of what you find moſt efficacious, will be your ſureſt Guides. Every Book on the Subject of Eloquence is full of Rules: but the leſs you are cramped and fettered by theſe, your Eloquence will be the more natural, maſterly, and original. The grand Secret lies in *following Nature* in every Part, in the Method and Connexions, the Sentiments and Languages, the Voice, the Action, and the whole external Manner. Be Maſter of your Subject, and as it were *inſpired* with it; and then Light and Order will naturally dawn upon it: every thing will fall into the Place which becomes it beſt: one Part will introduce another, juſt at the time that the Minds of the Audience are prepared to receive it; and what follows will ſupport and fortify that which went before: the more plain and ſimple Truths will pave the Way to the more abſtruſe and complex ones; and the Proofs or Illuſtrations will ſtill riſe, one above the other, in a regular and eaſy Gradation, till the whole Force of Conviction breaks upon the Mind, and now allows you fair Scope to play upon every tender and paſſionate String, that belongs to the Heart of Man. Then be ſure to *feel* every Sentiment yourſelf, and to enter firſt into every Paſſion you want to communicate

municate to others: and unleſs your Imagination plays its Part very ill, the boldeſt Figures, the ſtrongeſt Images, and the moſt moving Expreſſions will pour in upon you, and animate your whole Diſcourſe and Manner with ſuch Life and Spirit, as cannot fail of winding up the Hearer's Mind to the utmoſt Pitch of Attention and of Paſſion. If you are thoroughly touched with the Importance and Dignity of the great Subjects of Religion and Virtue, you will not be ambitious of the Reputation of *fine Speakers*, nor ſtudy the little Ornaments of a *gaudy* Eloquence, ſuch as pretty Similes, ſtrained Antitheſes, poliſhed Periods, and the Play of Wit or Words. I am far from diſcouraging the cloſeſt Study and Application of Mind to one's Subject, previous to the appearing in public: but a great deal muſt be left to the extemporary Efforts of Nature, when the Speaker is enlivened with all the animating Circumſtances which attend public Speaking. That Man who has ranged every Thought, meaſured every Sentence, Tranſition, and Circumſtance of his Diſcourſe, and ſettled the whole Method of his Delivery in his Cloſet, may be indeed an elegant and correct Speaker; but I will venture to ſay, he can never be a popular and powerful Orator: he will fall into a cold phlegmatic manner of Speaking; or if he throw himſelf into a forced Heat, it will appear artificial, or elſe evaporate in a tedious inſipid Same-

neſs of Voice and Action; either of which are the dead Weights of genuine Eloquence. Whereas if the Speaker be thoroughly enlightened and warmed with his Subject, and feels *himſelf* the Paſſion he means to inſpire, *Nature*, in that caſe, will ſuggeſt the moſt becoming Ornaments, and ſignificant Phraſes; will vary the Tone of the Voice according to the Riſes and Falls, and different Turns of the Paſſion; and, in fine, will animate with the moſt expreſſive Air, Look, and Action, according to the ſeveral Feelings and Movements of the Mind. For *Nature* and *Paſſion* are more able Prompters than the moſt eminent Maſters of Elocution.——————Such a Speaker, with all his Repetitions, Breaks, Inaccuracies, and Chaſms in Diſcourſe, will force his way, through all Oppoſition, into the Bowels and Soul of the Hearer, and will kindle and ſet on fire his whole Frame; whilſt your ſmooth and ſtudied Declaimer will ſend him away as cool and unmoved as he found him.

But what need I enter farther into the Detail of Pulpit-eloquence? If you want to ſee the whole Machinery and Apparatus of it, diſplayed in the compleateſt Manner, I refer you to the great and good *Prelate of* Cambray's *Dialogues* on that Subject; who was himſelf the juſteſt Critic, and one of the beſt Models of Eloquence that I know.—But indeed, *Gentlemen*, there is a much

much higher Example than any merely human one, which I would recommend to you, even the *divine Teacher and Saviour* of Mankind, who ſpake as never Man ſpake. Study *his* Diſcourſes, imitate *his* Practice: in theſe you will find all the Maxims and Principles I have propoſed, executed in the higheſt Perfection: you will find the moſt ſenſible and palpable Manner of Inſtruction, clothed in the very Garb of Nature, and admirably proportioned to the rude and low Underſtandings of Men; the moſt juſt, and ſimple Paintings of the Heart and Life, borrowed from common Experience; the moſt pointed, and awful Appeals to the Conſcience; the ſtrongeſt Addreſſes to the Hopes and Fears of Mankind; the moſt ſublime and comprehenſive Views of GOD and Religion, Providence, and another World; the moſt ſevere and exquiſite Satire againſt the Vices of the Time; and the moſt gentle and alluring Applications to the Modeſt, the Fearful, and Single-hearted—all delivered with a Simplicity, Vehemence, and Majeſty, which are truly wonderful, and which, however they may be imitated, can never be equalled by mortal Men.

We thanked the amiable *Divine* for his uſeful Inſtructions, and walked home to our reſpective Dwellings.

THE END.

THE ELOQUENCE OF THE PULPIT,

AN

ORDINATION SERMON;

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A

CHARGE.

ACTS xviii. 24.

And a certain Jew, named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent Man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Epheſus.

FROM the Character that is given here of this primitive Miniſter, I will take occaſion to enquire at this time; what are the principal Ingredients of that ſacred Eloquence which every Miniſter ought to ſtudy. Though the Subject be ſomewhat uncommon for a Sermon, I hope it will not be altogether unſeaſonable at preſent. And though I am ſenſible it is a difficult one, yet the Confidence I have in your Candour, my reverend Fathers and Brethren, emboldens me to attempt it. What I fear moſt in this Undertaking, is leſt it ſhould be thought, that the Notion I am to offer, of the Eloquence in Queſtion, is too much raiſed, and that how eaſy ſoever it may be to conceive, it will be impoſſible to reduce it fully to Practice. It muſt be owned, indeed, that an accompliſhed Orator of any kind is exceeding rare. Such a Concurrence of noble Talents is neceſſary for ſo fine

fine a Production as falls not often to the Share of Humanity, and is the Privilege only of a few favoured and ſelect Spirits. Knowing this, we are apt to be diſheartened; and, from a ſecret Conſciouſneſs of our own Incapacity for excelling, to ſatisfy ourſelves with too defective a Standard. Or elſe not thinking perhaps of the Matter, certainly not thinking juſtly, we are apt to be indifferent; and, from a real Want of Taſte, to ſatisfy ourſelves with the common Standard, which is ſometimes exceeding low, and always too defective. What is the Effect of this? To encourage Sloth, to hinder every generous Effort, and prevent our performing any thing great or excellent of the kind. But it will be acknowledged on Reflexion, that in any Art whatever it is of uſe in general, to propoſe to ourſelves the moſt complete Model we can either find or imagine; which, by continually flaming in our Eye, may fire us with an Ambition of reſembling it; and though we ſhould never arrive at a perfect Reſemblance, yet by ſtrenuous and repeated Endeavours we ſhall at leaſt make very near Approaches to it. When we come to ſpeak, however, of the particular Talents requiſite for any Profeſſion, it may be neceſſary for the moſt part to hold a middle Way, between inſiſting on ſuch as are too high, and admitting of ſuch as are too low. If, upon the Subject before us, we ſhould be led to mention ſome Qualifications which may appear

to

to be of the former kind, what hath been now ſuggeſted muſt be our Apology. But it is hoped, that moſt of thoſe we ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak of, will be found ſuch as may be demanded very reaſonably; and by proper Means very poſſibly attained, where a Foundation is laid for them in the original Frame.

As to the Enquiry now propoſed, What is mainly neceſſary to conſtitute an eloquent Miniſter or Preacher? I would ſay for Anſwer, That a Man muſt be poſſeſſed of good Talents, both natural and acquired; That he muſt direct theſe to the great End of Preaching; and That he muſt be animated in this Undertaking, by a ſublime Spirit of Religion. After I have illuſtrated theſe three Points, I will conclude with ſome Motives to the Study of Chriſtian Oratory.—— And may GOD aſſiſt and proſper the Attempt.

I. The firſt Point is to ſhew, that to be an eloquent Miniſter or Preacher, a Man muſt be poſſeſſed of good Talents, both natural and acquired.

1. OF good natural Talents. I need not tell you, my Brethren in the Miniſtry, what high Encomiums have been made on Eloquence in general, by all who have treated of that Art, and what an happy Genius they all require in

thoſe

thoſe who would apply to it with Succeſs. Indeed the leaſt Reflexion may convince us, that the Art of inſtructing and perſuading Mankind, muſt neceſſarily be one of the nobleſt, if not the nobleſt of which the human Mind is capable, and muſt require, at the loweſt Reckoning, a conſiderable Strength and Variety of Parts. Will not this hold peculiarly true, when the Aim is to inſtruct Men in the moſt ſpiritual and exalted Truths, ſuch as are moſt remote from their external Senſes and daily Purſuits? Will it not hold peculiarly true, when the Aim is to perſuade them to thoſe Duties, to which their corrupted Natures and evil Habits are moſt repugnant? Or ſhall that be deemed a ſlight or eaſy Art, the profeſſed Deſign of which is no leſs than this, to bring Mankind to the Knowledge and Practice of true Religion, in ſpite of all the Oppoſition ariſing to both, from erroneous Opinions and depraved Diſpoſitions, frequently cheriſhed by a bad Education, and always ſtrengthened by the united Temptations of the World, the Devil and the Fleſh? Can it be thought, that ſuch a Deſign is to be managed to purpoſe, without much Addreſs? Or is this Addreſs to be acquired without natural Abilities, or with poor ones? Is that, which is the higheſt, at leaſt the worthieſt, Exertion of human Genius, to be attempted where there is no Genius? Are there peculiar Abilities required for excelling in every other Profeſſion of Importance? And does this

this divine Profeſſion require none at all, or ſuch only, as are lame and contemptible? What then! Are the Blind, the Halt, and the Maimed, in this Senſe alone, to be offered to the LORD in Sacrifice? Is the Temple of GOD to be made a Sanctuary for Weakneſs, Ignorance, and Inſignificance? Is not this a principal Source of that Contempt of the Clergy, ſo loudly and ſo long complained of? And does it not bear a very unfavourable Aſpect on the Intereſts of Religion and Society? Were it not earneſtly to be wiſhed for the ſake of both, as well as for Mens own Credit, and that of the Order, that ſuch as are born with mean Capacities, would be adviſed not to engage in a Profeſſion for which they are apparently ſo very unfit, which ſome of the moſt able Men have not thought of but with Trembling, nor undertaken but by a kind of Force; and with regard to the Difficulties of which, even an Apoſtle, nay the greateſt of the Apoſtles, finds Reaſon to cry out, 'Who is ſufficient for 'theſe Things?' 2 Cor. ii. 16.

I will not enter here into a full Detail of the original Endowments neceſſary to our Pulpit-Orator. I will juſt touch on ſome of them. Firſt of all, there is a ſound and clear Underſtanding. This wants no Proof. To go about to prove the Neceſſity of ſuch an Underſtanding, would be to offer an Affront to your's. Then there

there is a warm and lively Imagination, which will open to a Man the largeſt and faireſt Fields of Thought, and qualify him to exhibit to others in the moſt advantageous Manner, the various Objects both of the viſible and inviſible Worlds, by perpetually preſenting them to his own Mind in the moſt ſtriking and beautiful Points of Light, and producing in him an uncommon Senſibility of their moſt delicate and exquiſite Impreſſions. There is likewiſe a retentive Memory; which may ſerve as a Storehouſe to treaſure up the different Sets of Ideas, and Pieces of Knowledge, he any-how acquires, relative to his Profeſſion; and from whence he may bring them forth readily, both in compoſing and delivering his Sermons; 'like to a Man that is an Houſholder,' (to uſe our Maſter's own Compariſon) 'who bringeth 'forth out of his Treaſure, things new and old.' Mat. xiii. 52. Once more: there is what may be called a natural Elocution, or original Gift of Utterance; which, with the Aſſiſtance of ſome Practice, and the Knowledge of the Language, will enable him to expreſs himſelf freely and fluently, upon any Subject he underſtands.

Now, though Study, Exerciſe, and the Bleſſing of God, will, no doubt, greatly improve theſe Talents, where they are; yet I ſee no Reaſon to think they will produce them where they are not, and but little Reaſon to think they will ſufficiently

ſupply

ſupply the Want of them. I do not ſay, that a Man in that Caſe cannot be at all an uſeful, but this I preſume to ſay, that he cannot be truly an eloquent, Preacher. What has been ſaid of Poets, may be applied in this Senſe to Preachers: They muſt be born ſuch.

2. I ſaid that good acquired Talents were alſo requiſite; ſuch, for Inſtance, as the Knowledge of Religion at large, the Knowledge of the Scriptures in particular, the Knowledge of Men, and a competent Knowledge of Books, of ſuch at leaſt as are of the greateſt Uſe and Value.

1. With regard to the Knowledge of Religion at large: the indiſpenſible Neceſſity of this, is ſelf-evident. To undertake to teach any Science whatever without underſtanding it thoroughly, it is hard to ſay whether it be moſt abſurd or impudent. The Science of Religion, taken in its wideſt View, is an extenſive Thing. It comprehends under it the Knowledge of moral Duties, of natural Theology, and of revealed Truths; as being all eſſential, conſtituent Parts of the general Body of Divinity; all compoſing one grand, harmonious Syſtem; and all mutually borrowing and lending Light, Strength, and Beauty to one another. As God hath originally joined theſe Things together, his Servants are certainly never to put them aſunder. Every one

of

of them muſt ſuffer by ſuch an unnatural Divorce. Therefore our Preacher is not only to ſtudy the diſtinct Nature and reſpective Evidence of each, but to trace the Connexions and Coherence of all together; dwelling often on theſe Views, till they become quite familiar to his Mind, and he be in condition to Diſcourſe of them with that Readineſs and Command, which are the Reſult of being Maſter of any Subject.

But it is neceſſary to add here, that our evangelical Orator muſt be acquainted, in a very particular Manner, with the Conſtitution of the Goſpel-Covenant, or that great Myſtery of Godlineſs, into which thoſe Students of the angelic Order are ſaid to deſire to look, bending as it were from their Thrones to pry into it. This, you my Brethren, know well, is the principal Theme, and ultimate Scope of the Goſpel; the whole Structure of which is properly the unfolding of this Myſtery, or the Execution of that ſtupendous Plan of Salvation, which was conceived in the Breaſt of GOD from everlaſting, laid open in the Fulneſs of Time, executed in Part by the SON of GOD formerly upon Earth, and is carrying on by Him now in Heaven, as Maſter-Builder, appointed by the Father of all, to conduct and finiſh the great Deſign. Now as the Goſpel was intended thus to exhibit to us its different Proſpects or particular Openings; it muſt

muſt follow of Neceſſity, that a Preacher of the Goſpel ſhould apply himſelf chiefly to ſurvey this Plan, to mark its ſeveral Parts and Proportions, as far as they are to be ſeen at preſent, and to obſerve the Skill with which the Whole is contrived, and the End for which it is adapted; determining, with the Apoſtle PAUL, 'to know 'nothing,' that is nothing comparatively ſpeaking, 'ſave CHRIST and him crucifyed.' 1 Cor. ii. 2.

2. As it is the Scriptures that teſtify concerning CHRIST, and contain the Words of eternal Life, ſo our Preacher ought undoubtedly to have an accurate and comprehenſive Knowledge of thoſe inſpired Writings; not that merely which is critical and curious, though that too be uſeful in its Way; but principally ſuch a Knowledge of them, as may render him 'a Scribe well in-'ſtructed in the Myſteries of the Kingdom,' and qualify him to unfold and inculcate theſe, by the Aſſiſtance of Lights and Arguments borrowed from the Writings themſelves; to uſe them, in fine, as the great 'Weapon of his Warfare, 'mighty through GOD to the pulling down of 'ſtrong Holds, caſting down Imaginations, and 'every high Thing that exalteth itſelf againſt 'the Knowledge of GOD, and bringing into 'Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of 'CHRIST.' 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

In

In citing Scripture, he is not, I conceive, to load his Sermons with an indigeſted Heap of Quotations from thence; ſome of them plainly unneceſſary, others poſſibly miſapplied. But for the Proof or Illuſtration of any important Point, he is to adduce one, or two, or ſometimes more well-choſen Paſſages, either immediately relating to it, or eaſily applicable by way of Analogy. Theſe it may ſometimes be ſufficient barely to mention. But when a particular Streſs is intended to be laid upon them, it may then be proper to read them along with the People, and by briefly deſcanting on them, to point out their Emphaſis and Application.

It were impoſſible to enumerate here all the different Ways in which the ſacred Writings may be applied by a Preacher; they contain ſuch a Number and Variety of ſurpriſing and intereſting Facts, equally inſtructive and entertaining; of real and ſuppoſed Characters, both good and bad; of affecting Repreſentations of the Nature and Life of Man; of Diſcoveries relating to ſpiritual and eternal Things, wonderfully awakening and elevating to the human Mind; of Sentences and Sayings, the moſt pungent to the Heart and Conſcience; of Promiſes unſpeakably ſoothing and tranſporting on one hand, and of Threatenings no leſs awful and tremendous on the other;

other; of Parables or Allegories, generally founded on the moſt common Occurrences of Life or Objects of Nature, ſtrongly marked, and wrought with a divine Simplicity, and therefore inexpreſſibly beautiful and touching; of Imagery more rich, more ſublime, more ſtrong, more tender, than is to be found in any other Compoſition, how admired ſoever; not to ſpeak of all the Diverſity of rhetorical Figures; occaſionally introduced with admirable Propriety, Grace, and Energy. Oh, my Brethren, what a Treaſure of heavenly Eloquence have we here! How happy ſhould we be, had we Hearts to value and Heads to improve it!

The Apoſtle PAUL ſtyles the Word of GOD 'the Sword of the Spirit.' May not we ſtyle it the Preacher's Sword too? 'quick and power-'ful, when ſkilfully handled; ſharper than any 'two-edged Sword, piercing even to the divi-'ding aſunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the 'Joints and Marrow.' Heb. iv. 12. Indeed, as that great Doctor of the Church obſerves to his favourite Pupil, 'all Scripture is given by Inſpi-'ration of GOD, and is profitable for Doctrine, 'for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in 'Righteouſneſs; that the Man of GOD may be 'perfect, thoroughly furniſhed to every good 'Word and Work,' 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. It deſerves our Notice, that when it is ſaid in the

Text, APOLLOS was an eloquent Man, it is immediately added, 'and mighty in the Scriptures:' and accordingly, we are told at the 29th Verſe, that 'he mightily convinced the Jews, 'ſhewing by the Scriptures that JESUS was the 'CHRIST.'

3. I mentioned likewiſe the Knowledge of Men, as a neceſſary Qualification for the Eloquence of the Pulpit. I am exceeding ſenſible, that a thorough Knowledge of Men is to be acquired only by practiſing them much, converſing with them long, and ſeeing them in a Variety of Scenes and Circumſtances; in ſhort, by wide Views, and great Experience of the World; Advantages, which, it muſt be owned, few, very few Preachers enjoy. Therefore we muſt ſupply the Want of them, the beſt Way we can, by an accurate Obſervation of human Nature and Life, as far as they fall under our Notice, by a careful Peruſal of thoſe Books which give the juſteſt Notions of both, eſpecially the beſt written Hiſtories, and in fine, by marking attentively what paſſes in our own Breaſts from time to time.

Now I ſay, that as in order to work ſucceſsfully on any Subject, we muſt firſt know its Nature and Qualities, ſo it is obvious that before we attempt to work upon Men, of all Subjects the

the moſt nice, we had need to know them; to know their Opinions, Paſſions, and Corruptions; what are the Views that touch them moſt ſenſibly, and the Motives that have the greateſt Influence on their Minds; by what Avenues, of courſe, Truth may find the readieſt Acceſs to them, and by what Handles they may be moſt eaſily taken, and moſt ſecurely held. To attempt to operate upon Mankind without a tolerable Acquaintance with theſe Things, would be almoſt every whit as groſs and preſumptuous, as for one to profeſs Phyſic who was ignorant of the animal Œconomy, of the various Diſorders incident to it, and the Methods proper for their Cure.

A public Teacher ſhould know, not only the Nature of Man in general, but likewiſe the particular Characters, Sentiments, and Humours of the People with whom he is immediately concerned; ſince it is manifeſt, that without this, he cannot reaſonably expect Succeſs, any more than that Phyſician, who ſhould undertake to cure a Patient, without knowing either his particular Conſtitution, or the ſeveral Symptoms of his preſent Diſtemper.

4. The laſt acquired Talent I mentioned as neceſſary to form an eloquent Preacher, was a competent

competent Knowledge of Books, of ſuch at leaſt as are of the greateſt Uſe and Value.

Among theſe I reckon in the chief place ſuch Books as contain the moſt majeſtic and amiable Repreſentations of the Character, Adminiſtration, and Works of GOD, and the moſt juſt Account of the Frame, Evidences, and Deſign of the Goſpel, particularly of the marvellous Scheme of Redemption by the LORD JESUS CHRIST; and alſo ſuch as treat, with the greateſt Depth and Unction, of the Origin, Spirit, and Progreſs of true Religion, conſidered as a divine Nature and Life, communicated to the Soul by the Influence of GOD, exerting itſelf in genuine and ſubſtantial Effects, and carried on by various Means through various Stages, till it come 'unto 'a perfect Man, unto the Meaſure of the Sta-'ture of the Fulneſs of CHRIST,' and arrive finally at a State of triumphant and immortal Bleſſedneſs.

Next to ſuch Writings are thoſe, which diſplay a ſublime Standard of Morals, and abound in the moſt virtuous and exalted Sentiments; or beſt unfold the Conſtitution, Connexions, and Obligations of Man; or give the moſt deep Inſight into the human Heart, or preſent the moſt comprehenſive and natural Draughts of Men and Manners

Manners taken from real Life, and the Hiſtory of Mankind.

Nor are thoſe Authors, I think, to be forgotten who write well on the principal Sciences and Arts; as it is apparent, that ſome Knowledge of theſe will not only open and invigorate the Mind, but furniſh it with a great Diverſity of Lights and Analogies for illuſtrating and embelliſhing different Subjects.

I hope I ſhall be forgiven, if I take the liberty on this Occaſion, to recommend to a Preacher's Peruſal, Works of Imagination, in a particular manner; thoſe being peculiarly adapted to feed and nouriſh that Faculty, which we obſerved before is a main Ingredient in the Compoſition of an Orator; to give him a noble Race of Thought, to enrich his Soul with the fineſt and grandeſt Perceptions, and enable him to paint both natural and ſpiritual Things in the moſt lively Colours, to engage the Attention, intereſt the Hearts, and agitate the Paſſions of his Hearers at pleaſure.

In general, he ought to be much converſant with Books of the higheſt Character for fine Writing, in order to improve his Taſte for Compoſition, to give him a Compaſs and Purity of Language not to be acquired otherwiſe, and

to form him by degrees to that Style which ſhall be found moſt fit for the Pulpit. Were I to venture at the general Definition of ſuch a Style, I would call it in a few Words ſimple, yet great; adorned, yet chaſte; animated and ſtrong, at the ſame time eaſy, and ſomewhat diffuſe; and, in fine, numerous and flowing, without running into the poetical, or ſwelling into the bombaſt. It is to be remembered, however, that one's Manner muſt be varied in particular Inſtances, according to the Subject handled, or the Aim propoſed. Sometimes, for Inſtance, one muſt uſe the plain familiar Style, ſometimes the figured and pathetic, and at others riſe into the ſolemn and majeſtic; now ſpread out his Diſcourſe, to explain or amplify a Point; then contract it, to give it greater Weight and Force. It ſhould likewiſe be raiſed or lowered to that Pitch or Key, which is ſuited moſt to the greateſt part of the Audience.

I need ſcarce obſerve upon this Article, that a Preacher ſhould know what hath been written by the greateſt Maſters on the Subject of Eloquence, whether ſacred or civil, and withal ſhould mark how the ſeveral Rules laid down by them, have been executed in the moſt celebrated Samples of either kind: often reading and pondering ſuch Pieces; thoſe particularly of the two great Orators of Greece and Rome, with a few of the Homilies left us by the beſt of the ancient Fathers;

Fathers; and alſo a few, (he will find perhaps but a few) of our modern Sermons, that are compoſed with Spirit and Taſte in that Way.

But though he ought, no doubt, to make a proper Uſe of all the beſt Models he can find; let him beware of ſervilely copying any. If he would be truly original and excellent in his Profeſſion, let him give full Flight and Range to his particular Genius, and make what he chooſes to borrow from others in a manner his own, by caſting it into a different Mould and transfuſing a kind of native Fire through the whole.

But is not ſuch a Courſe of Study as hath been now pointed out, too long and too laborious? I believe not: it will be found, perhaps, upon a ſtrict Scrutiny, that in moſt of the Branches before mentioned, the Works of unconteſted Merit and Value are in reality not many. And if inſtead of injudiciouſly loſing ourſelves amidſt a promiſcuous Multitude of Books of all ſorts, we ſhewed a juſt Diſtinction, and true Diſcernment, in reading thoſe only, or chiefly, which are of ſterling Worth in their ſeveral kinds; a vaſt deal of Time and Labour would thus be ſaved, and incomparably greater Advantage reaped.

I ſhall only add, that the very largeſt and beſt Reading will after all be little effectual to the

Purpoſes of Preaching, unleſs it be accompanied, for at leaſt a conſiderable time, with frequent and careful Compoſition; which not only ſerves to convert what a Man reads to ſolid Subſtance and vital Spirit, like the Power of Digeſtion in the human Body; but is neceſſary to give him an Habit of ranging his Thoughts more readily and diſtinctly, of extending his Views to a wider Compaſs, and of expreſſing himſelf with greater Variety, Copiouſneſs, and Maſtery, on every Subject.

Thus much for the Talents, both natural and acquired, which appear requiſite to our Chriſtian Orator. Let us now ſee, how theſe are to be directed and applied to the great End of Preaching; which was,

II. The next general Point propoſed to be conſidered. It is abundantly evident that the proper Standard, or Meaſure of Excellence, in any Art, is to be taken from the End which it hath in view. Whatever is calculated adequately to anſwer that, is ſaid to be according to the Standard, or excellent in its kind. An exact Knowledge of the End therefore, and a ſteady Regard to it, muſt regulate the Attempts of every Performer, in his reſpective Art. What then is the End of Preaching, that beſt of Arts, now under Conſideration? It is obvious, I think, that

that it can be no other in general, than to make Men wiſe and good, by inſtructing them in the Doctrines and Precepts of the Goſpel, and perſuading them to believe in one and ſubmit to the other. This, my reverend Brethren, is the ſupreme, the ultimate Mark we are to fix to ourſelves from firſt to laſt, and at which we are in one ſhape or another to aim in all our Performances. This is that Pole-ſtar, by which we are invariably to ſteer our Courſe. If the Preacher that is poſſeſſed of the Talents ſuppoſed, keeps this conſtantly in his Eye; then indeed, with the Aſſiſtance of Truth for his Chart, of Sincerity for his Compaſs, and for his Pilot that good Genius who never fails of conducting the Pious and the Good, he can ſcarce miſtake his Way, or fall ſhort of Succeſs at laſt.

Let us ſurvey the general Track, in which we may ſuppoſe he will proceed. Let us obſerve a few Things for inſtance, in relation to the Spirit and Compoſition of his Sermons, and to his Manner or Deportment in the Pulpit.

1. In relation to the Spirit and Compoſition of his Sermons: It is ſcarce neceſſary to obſerve, that he will always chuſe for the Subject of them, ſomething of real Importance to the religious and moral Improvement of his Hearers, ſomething that is pregnant with uſeful and noble

Truths, such as it becomes a Man to deliver, who professes to speak, in the Name of the living GOD, to rational and immortal Creatures. He will avoid entirely whatever is not 'agree-'able to the Form of sound Words, nor good 'to the use of edifying.' And he will avoid as much as possible, 'doubtful Disputations,' or Controversies concerning Matters of mere Speculation, and the subtil Distinctions of Parties; such as lie at a Distance from the Vitals of Religion, and are apt to divert Mens Attention from these, to breed a wrangling Disposition and distempered Zeal, extremely pernicious to them; and as the Apostle expresses it, 'to minister 'questions, rather than edifying.' When it happens that any Circumstance of Necessity or Point of Prudence leads him to touch upon these Subjects, he will always do it with Moderation, and never fail of cautioning the People against laying a Stress upon Things of that nature, or shewing any want of Affection for such as differ from them. As to those minute Criticisms, trifling Conceits, Words without a Meaning, Divisions without a Difference, quaint Turns, forced Allusions, and other frivolous Flourishes of a childish or low Fancy, which have sometimes filled and debased Sermons; all these he will heartily despise, as alike beneath the Majesty of the Pulpit, and the Dignity of true Eloquence.

When

When he is to preach to a popular Audience, he will carefully guard againſt learned Inquiries, abſtracted Reaſonings, and great Refinements of every kind; well knowing, that nothing can be fit for the Hearers, but what is level to the Capacity of the Hearers; and that, as the Goſpel was mainly intended to be preached to the Poor, it muſt be as abſurd as it would be unfair to entertain theſe, and ſuch as theſe, with School-lectures, and philoſophical Diſſertations. He certainly ſpoke like a Man of Senſe as well as Conſcience, who ſaid on another Occaſion, that 'in the Church he had rather ſpeak 'five Words ſo as to teach others, than ten 'thouſand Words in an unknown Tongue.' 1 Cor. xiv. 19. In effect, we ſpeak in an unknown Tongue, when, though we uſe the common Language, we ſpeak what is not underſtood. In ſhort, our ſpiritual Orator will lay it down as a ſacred Maxim, not to bring into the Pulpit any thing but what is ſuited to the End for which the Pulpit was erected, *viz.* the inſtructing and edifying Mankind. But this is not all.

As he will take care never to preach what does not appear expedient or proper: ſo he will ſtudy always to preach in the moſt uſeful Manner what does; 'commending himſelf to every 'Man's Conſcience in the ſight of GOD.' He

will think it by no means ſufficient, merely to deliver nothing but ſound Doctrine, or to deliver it with Order, Connexion, and Propriety: Since he knows, that one may very poſſibly do all this, and miſtake the Mark widely notwithſtanding. It may indeed ſeem ſtrange, yet to me it ſeems true, that a Preacher may propoſe a very regular Method, proſecute it very exactly, expreſs himſelf all along with abundance of Accuracy, and if you will, of Elegance too, adorn the whole with many a fine Flower, and artificial Trapping of Language, in ſhort deliver a very pretty Harangue, a very genteel Diſcourſe, as it is commonly termed; which yet may prove after all but a ſorry Sermon, and in reality good for little, but to amuſe ſuperficial Judges, and to convince thorough ones, that the Man aſpires at the Reputation without the Qualities of an Orator. Certain it is, a Diſcourſe may have all the Properties juſt now mentioned, and yet be ſo cold and dry, or abſtruſe and ſcholaſtic, or ſome-how ſo unintereſting and remote from Life, as never to come home to Mens Buſineſs and Boſoms, nor appear at all framed to inſtruct or move them. The Preacher who truly deſerves that Name, will not, cannot ſatisfy himſelf with any thing, but what ſeems directly calculated to convince and perſuade his Hearers. If, unhappily at any time, his Sermons ſhould not have this Tendency, he would condemn

condemn them himſelf, let them have what other Qualities they would, or be ever ſo much applauded by half-thinking People. By the way, let it be remembered, that I ſpeak all along of that kind of Conviction and Perſuaſion only, which is within the reach of human Art, not of thoſe ſacred Impreſſions, which are the incommunicable Province of a divine Teacher.

Entirely governed by this grand Principle of Uſefulneſs, our modern *Apollos* will labour, in all his Preparations for the Pulpit, to turn his Thoughts into ſuch a Shape, as ſhall bid faireſt for drawing the Attention, enlightening the Minds, and affecting the Hearts of his Audience. He will often aſk himſelf, not only whether this Obſervation, that Sentiment, or the other Argument be juſt, but whether it will probably be underſtood and felt by the People? He will often reflect, what Topics and what Expreſſions he would uſe, was he in a natural and unconſtrained Manner to explain or prove any Point to a Man of ordinary Underſtanding. As moſt Auditories, perhaps, are compoſed chiefly of Perſons of ſuch an Underſtanding; therefore the ſame Manner, with ſome few Alterations, will be found I believe to anſwer pretty univerſally. This is the general Rule. The particular Application of it is infinitely various,

according to the infinite Variety of Subjects and Occaſions which occur.

This Rule being once admitted, will effectually cut off a Number of Things which, how ambitiouſly ſoever they have been ſometimes ſought after, are real Blemiſhes, not Beauties, in the Compoſition of Sermons. I would be underſtood to mean the ſcholaſtic Nicety of Method, the formal Regularity of Argument, the conſtant Glitter of ſhining Phraſes, and the endleſs String of rounded Periods; which inſtead of anſwering the Purpoſes of genuine Eloquence, only ſerve to ſtiffen a Diſcourſe, carry too much the Appearance of Deſign, betray too laborious an Attention to Trifles, and depart too far from the Simplicity of Nature. In place of theſe, a certain graceful Eaſineſs, a certain happy Negligence, if I may be allowed the Expreſſion, will be found to have a much better Effect; provided it appear from the Seriouſneſs of the Preacher's Air, that this looſer Manner i owing, not to any want of Pains in his Studies, or of Reſpect to his Audience, but ſolely to his being too deeply impreſſed and awed with what he is about, to have any Leiſure or Inclination for minding little Things. It is allowed, I think, that the Perfection of Art in general, lies in concealing Art, and making the whole appear the pure Expreſſion, as well as Effort of Nature.

Nature. A Maxim never ſurely more true, than when applied to Subjects of the greateſt Solemnity and Importance. May we not ſay therefore on the whole, that the Perfection of the Pulpit-art lies in the Preacher's ſo involving himſelf in the Grandeur of his Subject, and hiding his Addreſs under the Veil of Simplicity, as to turn off the Attention of the Audience, from the Luſtre of his Talents and the Excellence of his Performance, to the Truths which he delivers; in fixing their Eye upon theſe, with a kind of ſevere Delight; in filling their Minds with Conviction, and their Hearts with Reſolution; and in ſending them away at laſt ſilent; grave, and thoughtful, inſtead of ſmiling to one another, and applauding him. To do this ſucceſsfully, is a Preacher's higheſt Glory; to aim at it faithfully, is the next Degree of Praiſe. But to return.

I would obſerve, that a Preacher of true Taſte will chuſe for ordinary, I do not ſay always, to make his Diſcourſes turn upon ſome one leading Truth, or another; which ſhall run through each from Beginning to End, and ſerve to collect the ſeveral Parts together, and to which they ſhall all point as to their common Center, throwing one joint Blaze of Light upon it, and being chiefly or ſolely ſubſervient to that End, ſo that, if I may be permitted here to borrow a Com-

Compariſon from one of the fine Arts, the moſt of his Sermons will reſemble in this reſpect a genuine Piece of Hiſtory-painting, where the ſubordinate Figures, though variouſly diverſified from one another, have yet ſome general predominant Air or Feature, which runs through them all, and leads the Eye at firſt ſight to the principal Figure, for the ſake of which they were deſigned, and which they all conſpire to ſet off in the moſt diſtinguiſhed and affecting manner. It is ſcarce to be told, how much a proper Correſpondence among the ſeveral Heads of a Sermon, and the joint Subſerviency of them all to one ruling Point, will contribute to the Uſefulneſs, as well as Beauty of ſuch a Performance, by ſpreading Light and Order through the whole, and bearing home the main Argument ſo forcibly and fully on the Hearers, as to leave their Minds deeply penetrated and entirely poſſeſſed with it.

But then a Preacher of real Judgment will take care ſtill to blend Variety with this Uniformity. He will not dwell long on one ſingle String: He will vary the Notes and Meaſures frequently; and, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, will, like ſome able Maſter of the muſical Art, touch off ſometimes the ſofeſt Airs, and then on a ſudden ſtrike the Inſtrument with a bolder Hand. By theſe Means he will keep the public Ear

Ear ſtill awake, and hold the People's Thoughts in an agreeable Agitation all along.

To ſpeak more plainly, he will addreſs ſometimes to one leading Power of the Mind, ſometimes to another. In one part of his Diſcourſe he will apply himſelf principally to inform the Underſtanding, in another to ſeize the Imagination, in another to alarm the Conſcience, in another to excite ſuch Affections of the Soul as are ſuitable to his preſent Deſign. The firſt of theſe is commonly attempted in the Beginning, and the laſt reſerved for the Concluſion. A Preacher is certainly never to move the Paſſions, without convincing the Reaſon of Mankind. But for the ſake of that Variety, we were juſt now recommending; perhaps the beſt way for ordinary, is to make the more ſpeculative and cool, and the more warm and practical Parts of a Sermon, ſucceed each other by turns; though the Preacher undoubtedly ſhould always flame moſt towards the End. Thus much is clear, that neither is to be excluded; Light without Heat in this Inſtance is unaffecting; Heat without Light, tranſient; and both when ſeparate from each other, uſeleſs *.

The

* As to the particular Detail or Order of Compoſition for the Pulpit, no one conſtant Rule could properly be given. That muſt be determined by the Preacher's own Judgment, upon a due Conſideration of

The Methods of addreſſing to the ſeveral Powers are innumerable. The following may be of particular Circumſtances. As theſe are very different at different times, ſo various Forms and Methods muſt no doubt be practiſed. The following Hints however, founded in Reaſon, and juſtifyed by Experience, may be of uſe in general. As many Heads or Diviſions, and no more ſhould be commonly laid out in each Diſcourſe, as can be ſufficiently amplifyed within the Bounds of it, ſo as to be rendered ſenſible to the Hearers. They ſhould be quite diſtinct from one another, at the ſame time that they all concenter in the main Point. The moſt eminent and luminous Topics ſhould ſtill be choſen, and thoſe of inferior Moment and Luſtre paſſed over without ſcruple. For our Buſineſs, I apprehend, is not to huddle a great many things together at once, but to ſelect a few that appear of the greateſt Beauty and Importance, and to place theſe in their moſt advantageous Attitudes. In treating each Particular, it ſhould be inſiſted on juſt long enough to affect the Audience, without tiring them. To hit ſo nice a Medium will undoubtedly require great Judgment. But yet it may be hit, if they be led on in a natural Track ſtep by ſtep, from one Reflexion and Diſcovery to another; if they be ſtill made to expect ſomething new, inſtructive, or intereſting, as they advance; if a Glimpſe of it be now and then given them at a Diſtance, and it ſeem gradually to unfold itſelf to their View; if agreeable Rounds of Thought, ſo to ſpeak, be frequently taken; if a Succeſſion, in ſhort, of intellectual Proſpects be opened from time to time; and if this Variety of Matter be accompanyed, when neceſſary, with a Variety of Voice and Action. By theſe Methods, joined with the others above-mentioned, it is poſſible, I think, to ſuſtain the Spirit of a Diſcourſe, and to allure the Curioſity,

be reckoned a few of the principal; a conciſe and animated Narration of Facts; a Series of Proofs, not

Curioſity, and fix the Attention of an Audience to the laſt, which is never indeed ſo well, if at all, done, as when their Thoughts are kept in a kind of pleaſing Hurry, continual Exerciſe is given to their active Powers, and that inextinguiſhable Thirſt of Novelty, ſo natural to the human Mind, is gratifyed with increaſing Delight. It may be proper to obſerve, that for the ſame Reaſon, the moſt plain and practical Subjects ſhould be ſeaſoned with a Mixture of Speculation and Entertainment, when they will eaſily admit of it; and that the moſt common and familiar Truths ſhould be enlivened and ennobled by the Turn which is given them. I will add too, that thoſe Parts of our Sermons which are moſt pathetic and vehement, ſhould generally be but ſhort, as the ſtronger Emotions of Mens Minds are naturally ſo, and they have need of frequent Unbendings to recover their elaſtic Force. A Remark which holds peculiarly true of the People of theſe Nations, whoſe prevailing Genius is of a cool and ſober Strain.

After all, it is poſſible that a great deal of what is here advanced concerning the Eloquence of the Pulpit, may be deemed by many, needleſs Refinement. And perhaps it would really be ſo in ſome Reſpects, were we never to preach to any but ſenſible and ſerious Hearers. But I am perſuaded it will be found upon Trial, that no little Art is neceſſary to rouſe the Attention, inform the Underſtandings, and impreſs the Hearts of the more groſs and thoughtleſs Hearers; who in moſt Places, I doubt, are not the leaſt Part. To preach to the Intelligent requires Senſe: to preach to the Ignorant requires Senſe, and Skill too. The firſt will attend to Truth, whenever they hear her Voice: the laſt will not attend to her, till ſhe once engage them by her beautiful Dreſs, attractive Air, and inſinuating Manner.

not too many, led on in an eaſy, popular Manner; Objections fairly ſtated, and fully anſwered; Caſes ſuppoſed, reaſoned on, and applyed; Propoſitions traced with Perſpicuity to their firſt Principles, in the way of a natural Induction or Detail; frequent Appeals, lodged ſometimes to Reaſon, ſometimes to Conſcience; repeated and pointed Interrogations; ſhort Dialogues, Obſervations ſupported and exemplified from Scripture and from Life; Characters in both, very often drawn, at one time exhibited ſingle, at another contraſted, or compared together, moſt frequently the laſt; pithy Remarks, and touching Sentences, ſcattered up and down; Points of Importance, amplified, heightened, and ſwelled out; different Scenes and Objects, in this and the other World, painted with Strength and Juſtneſs; various Beings or Perſons, chiefly of the human Kind, introduced in particular Circumſtances, briefly but ſtrongly expreſſing their Thoughts and Feelings; Exclamations quick and few, inſpired and juſtified by the Occaſion; bold Apoſtrophe's thrown out in an Heat, but neither frequent nor long; ſudden Tranſitions; moving and home Addreſſes to different Sorts of Men; abrupt Sallies of devout Affection, of virtuous Indignation; of melting Compaſſion, of pious Zeal; and to mention no more, ſince it would be endleſs to mention all, Metaphors and Compariſons, apt and unforced, fetched from thoſe Quarters

chiefly, which lie moſt obvious to common Obſervation.

It is not to be imagined that all theſe Things are to be introduced conſtantly into every Sermon, or at any time crouded together in an Heap. It is evident they muſt be variouſly blended, proportioned and applied, according to the Nature of the Subjects and Character of the Audience. To judge this truly, and execute it naturally, is the whole Art of Preaching; impoſſible indeed to be attained, without the divine Aſſiſtance, great Attention, long Practice, and I will add, the free and candid Criticiſms of ſome Perſon or Perſons of equal Judgment, Taſte and Friendſhip.

Let me conclude this Head with one Obſervation more. It is this, that a Preacher ſhould conſider his Audience as compoſed of two very different and indeed oppoſite Claſſes, thoſe of good and bad Men, and remember, that under each of theſe there is included a great Diverſity of Diſpoſitions, Characters, and Caſes; to which he is to adapt himſelf as much as poſſible, 'reproving, rebuking, exhorting with all Long-'ſuffering and Doctrine;' ſometimes, like another *Boanerges*, thundering to his Hearers, and ſhaking them with the Terrors of *Sinai*; at others, proving, like the more amiable BARNABAS, a Son of Conſolation, and ſoothing them with all the

the Melody of *Zion*. In a word, he ſhould ſtudy, like 'that faithful and wiſe Steward,' our Maſter ſpeaks of, 'to give every Man his Portion of 'Meat in due Seaſon.' Luke xii. 42. We proceed now,

2. To conſider a little his Manner or Deportment in the Pulpit. I imagine then, I ſee him ſtanding in that ſacred Place, with an erect, yet modeſt Mien, the Picture of a Mind that is firm but free from Arrogance; with an animated yet compoſed Countenance, the Mirrour of a Soul entirely awake, at the ſame time collected in itſelf. I imagine, I hear him ſpeak like a Man full of his Subject, poſſeſſed with the very Spirit of it, and labouring under the Weight of thoſe Conceptions which it inſpires. In ſuch Parts of his Diſcourſe as are naturally cool, his Voice, Aſpect, and Demeanour are plain, equal, fixed: in ſuch as require Pathos, his Voice is vehement, without Straining; his Eyes expreſs his very Soul, without Affectation; his Action his nervous and ſignificant, yet ſmooth and temperate, the unſtudied Reſult and immediate Movement of his inward Feelings, never exceeding the Modeſty of Nature, appearing deficient rather than overdone, and always chaſtiſed by a commanding Senſe of Decency. Sometime he ſinks into a deep and ſlow Solemnity, overwhelmed with the Majeſty of ſome marvellous, grand, or awful Conſideration;

Conſideration; ſometimes he burſts into a Torrent of rapid Eloquence, irreſiſtably borne away by a kind of divine Enthuſiaſm; ſometimes he ſtops ſhort in a ſudden Pauſe of recollected Silence, as unable to vent the Workings of his Boſom, or cloathe the Greatneſs of his Perceptions in adequate Language. Now he melts into a mild inſinuating Tenderneſs, but without Whining; and now he riſes to a ſuperior Force and Emphaſis, but without Preſumption or Fierceneſs. As he cautionſly avoids a dull unmeaning Uniformity of Geſture, and the ſame conſtantly returning Tone or Cadence, Things totally inconſiſtent with true Elocution; ſo in all the Variations both of his Voice and Action, he ſhuns with the ſtricteſt Care every Appearance of Art, and ſeems manifeſtly to follow, throughout his whole Performance, the preſent Stream of Sentiment and Affection, flowing ſpontaneouſly from the Occaſion *.

Amidſt

* It was not judged proper, in a Diſcourſe of this Nature, to enter more minutely into the Rules of Elocution. But I cannot forbear regretting here, that a Matter of ſuch vaſt Importance to the Art under Conſideration, ſhould be ſo generally neglected or miſunderſtood. There is a common Apprehenſion prevails indeed, that a ſtrict Regard to thoſe Rules in Preaching, would be eſteemed theatrical. And the Dread, perhaps, of incurring this Imputation is a Reſtraint upon many. But is it not poſſible to attain a juſt and expreſſive Manner, perfectly conſiſtent with the Gravity of the Pulpit, and perfectly diſtinct from the

Amidſt ſuch Inſpiration on his part, (for a ſort of Inſpiration, we muſt, I think, call it) it is not likely the Hearers will remain without any Emotion on theirs; he marks them however with his Eye in the Run of his Diſcourſe, and obſerves if they ſeem to enter into it with Pleaſure, if they liſten with an Appearance of Attention and Concern, expreſſed either by an eager and ſteady Look, or by their Countenances turned and fixed downward; in ſhort, if there reigns a profound Stillneſs and awful Suſpence through the Aſſembly. If this be the Caſe, he is encouraged to proceed in the ſame Manner.

But

the more paſſionate, ſtrong and diverſified Action of the Theatre? And is it not poſſible to hit off this Manner ſo eaſily and naturally, as to leave no room for juſt Cenſure? An Affair this, it muſt be owned, of the utmoſt Delicacy; in which we ſhall probably often miſcarry, and meet with Abundance of Criticiſm at firſt. But ſtill I imagine, that through the Regulations of Taſte, the Improvements of Experience, the Corrections of Friendſhip, the Feelings of Piety, and the gradual Mellowings of Time, ſuch an Elocution may be acquired as is above delineated, and ſuch as, when acquired, will make its way into the Hearts of the Hearers, through their Ears and Eyes, with a Delight to both that is ſeldom felt; whilſt, contrary to what is commonly practiſed, it will appear to the former the very Language of Nature, and preſent to the latter the lively Image of the Preacher's Soul. Were a Taſte for this kind of Elocution once to take place, it is difficult to ſay, how much the Preaching-art would gain by it. Pronunciation would be ſtudied, an Ear would be formed, the Voice would be modulated:

But if, on the contrary, he ſhould perceive in any Stage of his Progreſs a general Coldneſs and Liſtleſsneſs among his Hearers, does he condemn them entirely? No, he immediately ſuſpects ſome Failure on his ſide, ſomething amiſs in his Performance juſt at that time. What Courſe does he take? He alters inſtantly his Voice and Action. If this prove effectual, it is well. If not, he quits without Heſitation the preſent Scent, paſſes on to ſomething elſe more promiſing, and ceaſes not to try every Method of Addreſs, till he hath engaged and fixed his Audience; turning the Subject now on one ſide, then on another; placing its ſeveral Members in their

lated: every Feature of the Face, every Motion of the Hands, every Poſture of the Body would be brought under right Management. A graceful, correct, and animated Expreſſion in all theſe, would be ambitiouſly ſought after; mutual Criticiſms and friendly Hints would be univerſally encouraged; Light and Direction would be borrowed from every Quarter, and from every Age. The beſt Models of Antiquity would in a particular manner be admired, ſurveyed, and imitated. The ſing-ſong Voice and the ſee-ſaw Geſtures, if I may be allowed to uſe thoſe Expreſſions, would of courſe be exploded; and in time nothing would be admitted, at leaſt approved, among Performers, but what was decent, manly, and truly excellent in the Kind. Even the People themſelves would contract inſenſibly a growing Reliſh for ſuch a Manner; and thoſe Preachers would at laſt be in chief Repute with all, who followed Nature, overlooked themſelves, appeared totally abſorbed in their Subject, and ſpoke with real Propriety and Pathos from the immediate Impulſe of Truth and Virtue.

their moſt alluring Lights; and, on Topics of prime Importance, throwing out all the Riches of his Art, and the moſt maſterly Touches of Nature; whilſt by frequent Breaks and Reſts in his Diſcourſe, he affords a temporary Repoſe to himſelf and his Hearers, that both may return to the Charge with renewed Ardour.

But perhaps it will be ſaid, is not this a Picture without an Original, a mere fanciful Repreſentation, that hath nothing correſponding to it in Life or Nature? Can any Man then poſitively affirm that it is ſo? It may be we do not know ſuch a Preacher. That indeed is our Misfortune, but does not prove that there is none ſuch. Yet have not we known ſome who came pretty near to the Character juſt now drawn? And how difficult ſoever it may be to come fully up to it, who can ſay that it is impoſſible, or to what Pitch a Man of Genius may arrive with proper Aſſiſtances, and unwearied Application; eſpecially if he be governed and animated in all his Attempts by a ſublime Spirit of Religion; which was,

III. The laſt general Point propoſed. Now I ſay that ſuch a Spirit will be of noble uſe to a Preacher; with regard both to his private Studies, and to his public Performances.

1. With

1. With regard to his private Studies; it will be of noble uſe to direct and inſpire him in the Proſecution of them. I do not pretend indeed, that he either will or ought to confine himſelf wholly to ſuch Books and Speculations as have an immediate Connexion with his Office; tho' it appears, I think, from what was before ſuggeſted, that there are few Books or Speculations of real Significance, which may not contribute in one ſhape or another to qualify him for it; ſo that at any rate, a Circle extenſive enough is ſtill left him. But thoſe Parts of Study, which have the neareſt Relation to his Profeſſion, and may be of the greateſt Subſerviency to it, will undoubtedly be always taſted by him with the higheſt Reliſh, and purſued with the cloſeſt Aſſiduity. But in whatever courſe of Reading, or of Thinking, he is at any time engaged, he will be ſure to keep his favourite Deſign ſtill in view; and when any thing Occurs in either, that pleaſes or touches him more than ordinary, he will be naturally led to aſk himſelf, How ſuch a Train of Reflexion for Inſtance, or ſuch a Series of Reaſoning, or ſuch a Sentiment, Fact, or Obſervation, may be introduced in his public Addreſſes, with the greateſt Propriety and Advantage? Nor will this Man reckon any Expence of Time or any Labour of Thought too much, whether in his general Studies, or in his particular Preparations for the Pulpit, which may any way

way conduce to fit him for ſerving that Maſter, and promoting thoſe Intereſts, that are infinitely dear to him, by preaching Truths which are the Delight and Admiration of his Soul.

2. The ſame ſublime Spirit of Religion will have a glorious Effect on all his public Performances. Being poſſeſſed with a diſintereſted, pure, and ardent Love to his SAVIOUR and his Fellow-creatures, 'he will not,' we may believe, 'preach himſelf, but CHRIST JESUS the 'LORD, and himſelf the Servant of the People 'for CHRIST's ſake,' 2 *Cor.* iv. 5. Having imbibed the meek and lowly Spirit of his Maſter, he will not be ambitious of ſaying fine Things, to win Applauſe, but of ſaying uſeful Things, to win Souls. Far from fixing his Attention on his own Intereſt and Reputation, and thereby departing from the Simplicity, and diminiſhing the Efficacy, of the Goſpel; he will ſeek to throw himſelf and his Art into the Shade. Modeſty is graceful in every Speaker; nay abſolutely neceſſary to compleat his Character. It will even ſupply many Defects; whereas the Defect of it can hardly be ſupplied by any other Qualification, how great ſoever. But it is peculiarly graceful in the Chriſtian Orator, and indeed ſo eſſential to his Character, that without it, his Eloquence will be eſteemed an Oſtentation of his Parts, his Warmth Artifice,

fice, and his Addreſs Affectation. Where this amiable Grace ſhines in an eminent Degree, it ſteals into the Hearts of the Audience with a ſilent, but irreſiſtible Force, procures univerſal Regard, whilſt it pretends not to claim it, and perſuades more powerfully than a thouſand Arguments. As it is the genuine Offspring and inſeparable Attendant of that Poverty of Spirit, and Simplicity of Heart, which are the Corner-ſtones, as well as Touch-ſtones of Chriſtian Virtue, ſo I take it to be the only proper Counterpoiſe to that Vanity, and Self-ſufficiency, which are often imputed to the preaching Order, and which, wherever the Imputation appears to be juſt, are always Obſtacles to their Acceptance and Succeſs.

But whilſt the truly Chriſtian Preacher avoids this Extreme, he will guard againſt the oppoſite one of Falſe-modeſty, as what would diſcompoſe that manly Aſſurance which becomes an Advocate for the beſt of Cauſes, and damp that generous Fire which ought to warm all his Diſcourſes. 'He will never,' in any Inſtance, 'be 'aſhamed of the Goſpel of CHRIST,' having found it, by his own Experience, to be 'the 'Power of GOD to Salvation.' *Rom.* i. 16. He will inſiſt particularly on thoſe divine Peculiarities of it, the cordial Belief of which hath afforded himſelf unſpeakable Comfort and Edification. Having ſeen the tranſcendent Glories

of a Redeemer, and felt his omnipotent Grace upon his own Heart, he will be inexpreſſibly ſolicitous to bring others into an Acquaintance with him. And being deeply ſmitten with the Beauty of Holineſs, and raviſhed with its Sweetneſs, he will be no leſs ſolicitous to acquaint them with the great practical Deſign of Chriſtianity, and will 'affirm conſtantly that they 'who have believed in GOD ſhould be careful 'to maintain good Works,' *Tit.* iii. 8. In ſhort his ſupreme Study will be to explain and recommend the Goſpel, conſidered as an humbling and a ſanctifying Scheme, contrived to lead Men from themſelves to GOD, through a Mediator, for Pardon and Aſſiſtance, and in that Way to form them to a divine Nature and Life. But it were impoſſible to deſcribe the Zeal which he will teſtify on all Occaſions for promoting thoſe ſacred Intereſts among Mankind. His own Soul being touched and inkindled, as by a live Coal from the Altar of GOD, will like the Sparks be ever flying upward; and whilſt it is mounting aloft to the Regions of divine Truth and Love, will ſtrive to carry other Souls up along with it. 'Having been converted himſelf, he will labour 'to convert and to ſtrengthen his brethren,' *Luke* xxii. 32. Such a deep Regard for their Happineſs, and ſuch an undiſſembled Concern for the Miſery to which they are expoſed, will naturally appear in his whole Manner, as cannot miſs of winning

winning their Hearts, and giving a Charm and Energy even to the plaineſt Things which he delivers.

Need I obſerve to you, my Brethren, that the etherial Flame which burns in his Boſom will not only inſinuate itſelf through all his Sentiments and Feelings, but breathe out powerfully in the moſt fervent Expreſſions of both? 'The Unction he hath received from the holy 'One will teach him all Things.' 1 John ii. 20. 'The Secret of the LORD will be with 'him, and he will ſhew him his Covenant.' Pſ. xxv. 14. As the Face of *Moſes* ſhone, when he deſcended from the Mount after converſing with GOD, ſo the Fellowſhip which this Man enjoys with the FATHER and with the SON, cauſes his Soul to ſparkle and radiate, as it were, with a kind of celeſtial Light; that will in ſome ſort be reflected from his Sermons, and ſpread ſuch a Luſtre over them as muſt needs be perceptible to his Hearers, at leaſt to thoſe among them, of ſpiritual Diſcernment. By being often converſant with the moſt venerable Forms of the Divinity, and laying himſelf open to the Influence of ſo auguſt a Preſence, he cannot fail of conceiving great Thoughts, and of forming noble Deſigns in his Profeſſion, ſuch as will wonderfully enlarge and inſpire his Soul,

and ſerve at once to actuate and prompt him in every Performance.

'Out of the Abundance of the Heart the 'Mouth ſpeaketh,' *Mat.* xii. 34. It is an Obſervation of our SAVIOUR's, upon another Occaſion; but never more applicable than on this. What he ſubjoins to it concerning every good Man, is particularly true of every pious Preacher. Such a Preacher 'out of the good Treaſure 'of the Heart bringing forth good Things,' *Mat.* xii. 35. The Riſe, the Operations, the Growth, and the Joys of the divine Life; all theſe he will deſcribe truly and ſtrongly from the perſonal Fund of his own Experience. He will paint the ſeveral Virtues with a maſterly Hand, in their moſt juſt Proportions, and amiable Colours: for he will paint them from their living and beautiful Originals in his own Breaſt. He will warmly recommend, becauſe he warmly loves them. He will exclaim againſt their Contraries, with an honeſt Indignation and becoming Boldneſs, becauſe he deteſts, and is conſcious that he deteſts them. A Feeling of the Integrity of his Heart, and a Conviction of the Goodneſs of his Cauſe, will fortify and bear him out on all Occaſions; ſo that like his Maſter he will teach 'as one having Authority.'

Such

Such a Preacher will not come into the Pulpit as an Actor comes upon the Stage, to perſonate a feigned Character, and forget his real one; to utter Sentiments, or repreſent Paſſions not his own. No, the Man and the Preacher are in his Caſe one and the ſame. When he is in the Pulpit, the Man appears as well as the Preacher. When he is out of it, the Preacher appears as well as the Man. In the Pulpit he is the Man wound up to an higher Tone; the Man ſeen in the more ſolemn Light of a ſerious Character. Out of it, he is the Preacher unbent, the Preacher ſeen in the ſofter Light of ordinary Humanity. Or it may be taken thus: In the Pulpit, the ſerious Character appears in him, all pure and refulgent. Out of it, mixed and ſhaded; but ſtill it is the ſame ſerious Character; the Man of Virtue, the Man of Piety, ſtill appears. But to return.

Every Word that proceeds from ſuch a Preacher, will be big with Feeling and Concern of Mind. Every Thought will iſſue from the Center of his Soul. He will ſpeak naturally, for he will ſpeak becauſe he believes; he will appear in earneſt, for he will be in earneſt. To ſay all that needs to be ſaid, in a very little Compaſs: Whatever he advances will have a native Air, a peculiar Stamp of Sincerity, that

inexpreſſible kind of genuine Look, which belongs alone to unaffected Worth; which Art may imitate, but cannot reach: and which is infinitely more perſuaſive than the higheſt Art without it poſſibly can be. For in this Caſe there is perceived a kind of Sympathy between the Heart of the Speaker and the Hearts of the Hearers: The religious Paſſion vibrates and darts from one to the other; and a ſecret but powerful and inſtantaneous Stroke is felt, which may be compared in this View to the ſurprizing Effect produced by Communication in the Caſe of ſome late noted Experiments.*

Put all theſe Things now together. Suppoſe that to the natural Force of Genius, and to the intellectual Improvements before mentioned, thoſe religious ones laſt ſpoken of are added; and then ſuppoſe that the Spirits, the Imagination, all the Faculties of the Preacher, are heated and exalted by the Action of a Diſcourſe, by the Preſence of an Auditory, by their Attention eſpecially, and in fine by the Solemnity of the Place: Oh my Brethren, what, what muſt be the combined Influence of all this; whilſt the whole Man ſwells and glows with one pathetic grand Senſation, which breaking from him with its full Force, ſpreads and circulates among his Hearers, penetrates their inmoſt Souls,

* The Experiments in Electricity.

Souls, and ſhakes them to the very Foundations!

I will conclude this Diſcourſe, as I propoſed, with a few Motives to preſs the Study of Chriſtian Oratory on us who are Miniſters and Preachers of the Goſpel. I ſay then briefly, that this Study is our Duty, and will be our Advantage.

1. It is our Duty. But how can that be? it may poſſibly be aſked, ſince we find no leſs a Preacher than the Apoſtle *Paul*, declaring expreſsly to the *Corinthians*, that 'he came not to 'them with Excellency of Speech or of Wiſ'dom; that his Speech and Preaching was not 'with the enticing Words of Man's Wiſdom, 'not in the Words which it teacheth,' 1 *Cor.* ii. 1, 4, 13. Is not the Apoſtle *Paul* allowed in general to be a noble Pattern for ſucceeding Preachers? But how ſhall we reconcile many of the former Notions to his Practice in this Particular? The Objection is plauſible; let us conſider it.

We are to remember that *Corinth* was a famous City in *Greece*. At the time when our Apoſtle wrote, it ſeems that Country was overrun with a Set of Men called Sophiſts; a petulant diſputing Tribe, who prided themſelves in

being able, by dint of Argument and Rhetoric, to overthrow the plaineſt Truths, or to ſupport the moſt apparent Errors, who corrupted the Youth and miſled the People; entangling them in a Maze of falacious Subtility, and dazzling them with a ſpecious, but adulterate Eloquence; introducing by theſe Means a general Scepticiſm in Opinion, and of courſe, a prevailing Profligacy of Manners: on which accounts they are expoſed with juſt Severity by ſome of the wiſeſt Teachers and beſt Authors of ancient Times, as is ſufficiently known to thoſe who are converſant with their immortal Writings. Now it appears highly probable, that our Apoſtle, in the Expreſſions referred to, had theſe and ſuch like Corruptors chiefly in his Eye, as it was exceeding neceſſary to guard thoſe Chriſtians to whom he wrote, againſt their inſinuating and poiſonous Infection, than which nothing could be more repugnant to that Wiſdom which was from above; ſince that did eminently require a modeſt, child-like, and docile Diſpoſition: nor would ſo ſelf-denying and ſpiritual a Diſcipline as that of the Croſs, ever be reliſhed by thoſe of a contrary Temper. Therefore in the preceding Chapter, we find the ſame Apoſtle crying out, with an Air of noble Contempt, ‘ where is ‘ the Wiſe? where is the Scribe? where is the ‘ Diſputer of this World? has not God made

‘ fooliſh

'foolish the Wisdom of this World?' 1 *Cor.* i. 20. with much more to the same Purpose.

But whatever there may be in this, it is abundantly evident from other Considerations, that the Apostle did not mean to disclaim, or to condemn sound Eloquence rightly applied. He who was called by way of Eminence the Preacher, says of himself, 'that he sought to find out acceptable Words; and adds, that the Words 'of the Wise are as Goads, and as Nails fastened by the Masters of Assemblies.' *Eccl.* xii. 10, 11. Our Apostle admonishes *Timothy* 'not 'to neglect the Gift of GOD which was in him, 'but to stir it up, and to approve himself a 'Workman that needed not to be ashamed, 'rightly dividing the Word of Truth.' 2 *Tim.* i. 6.—ii. 15. Indeed St. *Paul* was a Man of too much Candor, Learning, and Judgment, to depreciate any useful Talent whatever, much less a Talent which hath always been esteemed by wise Men, and employed by able Ministers, as a powerful Instrument for promoting the Cause of Religion. It is recorded, we see, to the Honour of *Apollos*, that he was an eloquent Man. The evangelical Prophet, speaking probably in the Person of the MESSIAS, says, that 'the LORD GOD hath given him the Tongue 'of the Learned, that he should know how to 'speak a Word in Season to him that is weary.'

Iſ. l. 4. And our Saviour, we find, promiſes 'to give his Apoſtles a Mouth and Wiſdom 'which all their Adverſaries ſhould not be able 'to gainſay nor reſiſt.' *Luke* xxi. 15.

But what is fairly deciſive on the Point in queſtion is, that this great Apoſtle was in fact an Orator of the very firſt Rate himſelf, and made as much, perhaps more uſe of human Eloquence than any other Preacher that we know of. From what is left us of that wonderful Man, it were, I think, eaſy to ſhew that there is ſcarce a ſingle Figure belonging to the moſt perfect Oratory, which hath not been adopted by him with the greateſt Force and Beauty; and particularly that there is an Impetuoſity, a Vehemence, a Flame, in his Manner, which is quite peculiar to himſelf, and undeniably ſhews him to have been a Man of very ſuperior Genius and Parts.

Let us then, my reverend Brethren, according to the Meaſure of Grace and of Gifts beſtowed upon each of us, be ambitious of imitating *Solomon*, and *Paul*, and *Apollos*, and all the great Men of the preaching Order, in all Generations. Does not our Religion, does not our Maſter merit this from us? Are we not unjuſt and unfaithful to both, if we neglect it? Where

is

is our Zeal for the LORD of HOSTS? Where is our Veneration for the SAVIOUR of the World? Where is our Eſteem for his glorious Goſpel? Where is our Charity to immortal Souls? Where, I ſay, are our Regards for all theſe, if we do not what in us lies to advance their Intereſts?

What incredible Pains did the moſt celebrated Orators of Antiquity take to excel in their Profeſſion! What Labour of reading, thinking, writing, ſpeaking, did they chearfully undergo for that Purpoſe! How many Schools, how many Maſters, how many different and diſtant Places, did they go to, in order to learn their Art more perfectly! What ſevere Temperance did they practiſe in the Proſecution of their Studies! What diſcouraging Obſtacles, ſeemingly indeed inſuperable, did they bravely combat and conquer! Then how did they ranſack all the Riches of Art and Nature, all the Mines of Fancy, and all the Stores of Learning; exert every Power of Language, every Charm of Muſic, every Energy and Grace of Action; leave nothing in ſhort unattempted, that ſeemed within the Reach of Humanity, by which they might convince, captivate, perſuade, and tranſport their Hearers! Bleſſed JESUS, when ſhall the Preachers of thy divine Religion, learn to emulate

late theſe honeſt Profeſſors of human Eloquence? What ſhall we ſay? Is the promoting the moſt extenſive and durable Intereſts of Society, the ſaving Souls from Vice and Miſery, the leading them to Perfection and Happineſs, the ſpreading the Kingdom of Truth and Righteouſneſs, with the Honours of that adorable Perſon who is at the Head of it; are theſe, my Brethren, Deſigns of leſs Importance, or of leſs Power to inſpire, than the deciding Queſtions concerning Peace and War, concerning political Orders in a State or City; concerning the Lives of particular Perſons, or the Rights of private Property, or ſomething leſs material, perhaps, than any of thoſe.

But can any Height of Eloquence be alone ſufficient to ſecure Succeſs in Concerns of a ſacred Nature, as it hath done and may do in ſuch as are merely civil? We do not pretend it. We are perſuaded, that how fairly ſoever we ſubordinate Teachers may aim at Succeſs, there is only one ſupreme and efficacious Teacher, who can command it. Even a '*Paul* may plant, 'and an *Apollos* water;' but ſtill it is GOD who, in the ſpiritual as well as natural Huſbandry, muſt 'give the Increaſe.' He, indeed, can reform Mankind by the meaneſt Inſtruments, as effectually as by the moſt noble. 'Out of the

'Mouth

'Mouth of Babes and Sucklings, haſt thou 'O Lord, ordained Strength.' *Pſ.* viii. 2. 'And 'the fooliſh Things of the World haſt thou 'choſen, to confound the Wiſe, that no Fleſh 'might glory in thy Preſence, and the Excel-'lency of the Power might be of thyſelf alone.' 1 *Cor.* i. 27, 29.—2 *Cor.* iv. 7. 'This, my Bre-'thren, is the Doing of the Lord, and ought 'to be marvellous in our Eyes?' But what follows from thence? Becauſe the moſt enticing Words of Man's Wiſdom will not prevail, unleſs they are ſeconded by the Demonſtration of the SPIRIT, and the Power of GOD; does it follow, that the Demonſtration of Reaſon, and the Power of human Art and Language, are therefore to be laid aſide? How far theſe may go in their Effects upon the Hearers, and what thoſe Boundaries are, beyond which they cannot go; I apprehend, it is impoſſible for us to determine. But one thing is clear, and there we may reſt. We have a certain Part aſſigned us by the great Manager of the univerſal Drama. We are concerned with that, and no more. Let us take care to ſtudy our Part thoroughly, and to act it gracefully; the reſt we may ſafely leave to Heaven. If Heaven ſee fit to grant Succeſs, it is well. If not, we however ſhall be no Loſers. Our well-meant Endeavours will be

be ſure to turn to our own Advantage: which was,

2. The other Motive I propoſed to urge; and with it I ſhall wind up the whole. What Advantage then ſhall we reap from this Courſe? Much every way.

The Plan of Study in which it will engage us, will fill up the vacant Hours of Life worthily, furniſh a perpetual Variety of the moſt rational, manly, and elegant Entertainment, and exclude a thouſand little Cares, and low Gratifications, which contract our Minds, and degrade our Characters. Would it be refining too much to add, that Reading and Speculation purſued with true Taſte, will beget, by degrees, a certain Dignity of Thought that will probably be accompanied with a correſpondent Dignity of Behaviour? This is certain, that it will greatly improve our Parts and Performances, and withal oblige us to live more abſtracted from Company and the World; both which are Circumſtances, that muſt needs render us more reſpected and eaſy, as well as uſeful.

Then again, that Devotion and thoſe Virtues which we have ſhewn to be neceſſarily connected with Chriſtian Eloquence; how honour-

able

able and happy will they make us! How honourable! What Countenance and Friendſhip will they procure us from our Maſter! What Affection from the beſt Men! And what Reverence even from the worſt! How much Weight and Authority will they add to all our Inſtructions; whilſt the Hearers have it to ſay, the Miniſter, the Preacher is a worthy Man! What a generous Freedom, and undaunted Confidence will they give ourſelves, whilſt our own Hearts condemn us not, but ſecretly whiſper to us, that we believe the Doctrines, and practiſe the Precepts, which we preach! How happy too will they make us! What inward Eſtabliſhment, Tranquillity, and Triumph will they naturally produce! What unutterable Joys in the immediate Exerciſe, and after Review! How gay and goodly will every Thing appear, when beheld through ſuch a Medium! How fair the Univerſe, its Frame, its Government, its Author! How fair the very Afflictions which he ſends! Even Death itſelf, how fair! And oh the bright tranſporting Proſpects which will open beyond it——

What ſhall I ſay more? If we ſucceed in our Attempts for the Reformation of Mankind, it will ſurely be a mighty Acceſſion to our Felicity. If we do not, we ſhall ſtill however have the

the Satisfaction, the ſublime Satisfaction, to know, that we have done what became us. 'He too whom we ſerve, is not unrighteous to 'forget our Work and Labour of Love; and 'though *Iſrael* ſhould not be gathered, yet we 'ſhall be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord, and 'our God ſhall be our Strength.' Amen.

THE

THE CHARGE.

DEAR and reverend Sir, the Scene which now opens upon you is important and difficult. It is fit you ſhould enter on it with a ſolemn Pauſe. You are now to engage more immediately in a Deſign which hath employed all the Zeal of Prophets, and Apoſtles, and Evangeliſts, and all the Preachers of Righteouſneſs in every Country, and in every Age; in a Deſign, in which all the good Spirits of the upper World do, no doubt, warmly intereſt themſelves; in a Deſign, for promoting which, the SON of GOD hath performed and ſuffered, and is ſtill performing the greateſt Things; and finally, in a Deſign, which we have Reaſon to believe, is the higheſt Scheme of the great and good Parent of all, and the grand Aim of all the various, extenſive, and mighty Operations of his Spirit and Providence, through all the Periods of Time, and Generations of Men, from the Birth of the World to its general Conſummation. Yes, Sir, you are now called to be a Fellow-worker with GOD himſelf, as well as with all the Members of the Kingdom of Light, and with the glorious Head of it, in ſpreading the Triumphs of that Kingdom here below.——In ſpreading them

them how? By diffuſing the Light of divine Truth, and the Warmth of divine Love all round you, particularly through that Congregation which is now committed to your Care. Therefore every Time you view this Congregation, every Time you think of it, this affecting, this exalting Reflexion will naturally preſent itſelf: here is a Set of Creatures endowed with Reaſon, intended for Immortality, and baptized into the chriſtian Name, who are intruſted to my Inſpection by the great Shepherd and Biſhop of Souls. I am to feed this Flock of GOD with Knowledge; I am to watch it with Care; I am to lead it to green Paſtures by the ſtill Waters, to the Duties and the Joys of a religious Life; I am to go before it myſelf as an Example to the Flock, a Pattern of good Works, in Converſation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity; I am to do every thing in ſhort that in me lies, to conduct this People in the Paths of Righteouſneſs, to the beatific Preſence, and thus on my Part to extend the ſpiritual Empire of GOD by adding to the Number of its loyal Subjects, and to that Sum of final Happineſs, which was the ultimate End of its Erection. Oh glorious Undertaking, in Compariſon of which the boaſted Enterpriſes of the Heroes of this World, are to be eſteemed at beſt but as the Play of Children? Does not your Breaſt, Sir, take Fire already at the Thought? Does not your Heart leap with Joy, whilſt you entertain

entertain it? Will you think much to ſpend, or to be ſpent, in the Proſecution of ſuch a Deſign?

Numerous and arduous indeed are the Duties, in which the Proſecution of it will neceſſarily engage you. The Subſtance of theſe Duties is known ſufficiently, the Spirit of them is not. The elevated Genius of Piety, mentioned in the former Diſcourſe, will be the beſt Prompter and Inſtructer here; eſpecially if it be joined with that ſpiritual Prudence which is peculiarly neceſſary in the ſacred Office. This, Sir, is a Virtue which Heaven muſt beſtow, and Experience improve. My Experience hath been too little, to enable or to entitle me to ſay a great deal upon that Subject. I beg leave however to hint a few Things in relation to it.

This ſpiritual Prudence is evidently founded on a juſt Perception of the Propriety and Decorum of Actions and of Things, on a wiſe Reflexion upon the Conduct of others, and a ſtrict Attention to one's own. It requires a certain Coolneſs of Blood, and Compoſure of Thought. It is the Siſter and Companion of that Wiſdom which is from above. It is the Guide and Guardian of Life. It was recommended and exemplified at once by our divine Maſter; a Maxim of whoſe School, and a Rule of whoſe Conduct, we all know, it was, to join the Wiſdom of the Serpent

to

to the Harmleſsneſs of the Dove; a Maxim and Rule of marvellous Depth, Utility, and Beauty; diſcovering both a Sagacity and a Benignity in the Perſon who taught and practiſed it, that can never be enough admired; moſt worthy indeed of him who ſpake and acted as never Man ſpake or acted. As well in this, as in every other Inſtance, it will be your Intereſt and your Glory to learn of CHRIST. Your imbibing thoroughly this Part of his divine Philoſophy, will contribute as much perhaps as any Thing, to make you wiſe to win Souls. It will render you ingenious in diſcovering, and dextrous in employing, the moſt likely Means for that Purpoſe. It will teach you to 'take heed to Yourſelf and your Doctrine,' directing you both as to your Deportment, and as to your Miniſtrations.

As to your Deportment, it will direct you how to maintain the Decency and Grace of Character; and 'to walk circumſpectly, not as a Fool, but 'as wiſe.' Without ſpeaking of thoſe groſſer Miſcarriages, which I will not once ſuppoſe you capable of committing; it will guard you even againſt many ſlighter Miſtakes, which, though they may appear trifling perhaps in themſelves, are far, very far from being ſo in their Conſequences.

It

It will make you cautious of mingling much with the World, or becoming common in the public Eye; a Circumſtance, which, without extraordinary Virtues and extraordinary Opportunies of ſhewing them, ſeldom fails of breeding Contempt, at leaſt Indifference. When you ſtep from your Retirement, you will take care to preſerve, as much as poſſible, that Recollection and Seriouſneſs, which you have acquired there, and to carry theſe into Life with you; that you may not be thrown out of yourſelf, or off your Guard by the Encounters of Company and the Incidents of Converſation.

In Company, your Behaviour will be ſedate, but not ſullen; chearful, but not indiſcreetly gay; 'your Converſation will be ſeaſoned with 'Salt,' as the Scripture expreſſes it, 'ſo as to 'miniſter Grace to the Hearers, and ſerve for 'the Uſe of Edifying.' Not that you will 'caſt 'Pearls before Swine,' to uſe the ſtrong Language of our SAVIOUR, or have no Regard to Times, Places, and Perſons. But certainly, as often as you can do it with Propriety, you will chooſe to introduce ſuch Diſcourſe, or to inſinuate ſuch Reflexions, as may ſerve to make thoſe about you, wiſer and better, at leaſt, to convince them, that you wiſh they may be ſo.

I have obſerved frequently, that the Neglect of this in thoſe of our Profeſſion, hath been condemned by Perſons the fartheſt in the World from a grave Turn; who though perhaps they regard not the Decorum of their own Characters, are nevertheleſs extremely ſenſible and extremely diſpleaſed, if at any time we regard not the Decorum of ours. Poſſibly indeed, they may appear entertained with a frivolous Behaviour or Converſation in the mean time. But probably they will cenſure or ridicule us for it afterwards.

When you have Occaſion to be among the People, and you will not be among them often, but when you really have Occaſion, you will behave with Affability always, with Familiarity never; ſhewing ſuch Dignity, that no Man may deſpiſe you, and withal, ſuch Modeſty, that every Man may love you. In Imitation of the humane Apoſtle, you will become all Things to all Men, without departing however from that unalterable Integrity and uniform Greatneſs of Conduct, which he ſeems to point at when he ſays, 'If I ſeek to pleaſe Men, then am I not 'the Servant of JESUS CHRIST.' In a Word, as the ſame Apoſtle expreſſes it with the greateſt Juſtneſs, you will 'ſeek to pleaſe Men for their 'good to Edification,' no farther. To affect any

any other Popularity than this, you will ever eſteem a poor Purſuit, and to poſſeſs it, as poor an Acquiſition.

This ſpiritual Prudence of which I am now ſpeaking, will likewiſe be of excellent uſe to direct you in your Miniſtrations. It will teach you how to ſuit yourſelf to the different Tempers, Underſtandings and Circumſtances of your People; how to inſtruct the Ignorant, rouſe the Secure, confirm the Weak, comfort the Mourners in *Zion*, whether in Health, in Sickneſs, or at Death, by Applications proportioned to the Capacity, and adapted to the Caſe of each. It will teach you when and how to commend and to reprove; never to do one without Reaſon, nor the other without Neceſſity, and always to do one without Flattery, and the other without Paſſion. It will teach you to avoid all perſonal Reflexions in public, which ſeldom do good, but often harm; and when you admoniſh in private, to chooſe the moſt fit Seaſons, and to ſtudy the moſt engaging Manner, ſuch a Manner as may convince the Perſon you are admoniſhing, that nothing but Faithfulneſs to GOD, and Friendſhip to him, could induce you to uſe that Freedom.

When you find it neceſſary, in any Inſtance, to expreſs a juſt Indignation againſt bold or obſtinate Offenders, the ſame Prudence will teach

you how far to indulge it, and in what Inſtances to temper it with the Patience of Charity, and the Meekneſs of Wiſdom. It will teach you what Truths the People are able to bear, and what they are not; ſo as to prevent your flaſhing too much Light into diſtempered or weak Eyes, and attacking popular Errors in too haſty or direct a Manner, ſuch as by ſhocking would rather rivet than remove them. It will help you to diſcern the different Stages of the chriſtian Life in which any of your Flock may happen to be, and will lead you accordingly to miniſter ſtrong Meat to Men, and to feed with Milk thoſe who are yet but Babes in CHRIST. In fine, it will enable you to take the moſt proper Methods to perſuade your People, that there is nothing in the World which you have ſo much at Heart as their Welfare; and that it is them not theirs, that you ſeek. Indeed, if you can once perſuade them thoroughly of this, the Succeſs of your Inſtructions is in a manner certain; provided at leaſt they be accompanied with the Light and Charm of a worthy Example, and the powerful Influence of Prayer to GOD for his Bleſſing.

Oh Sir! what is there good or great, that may not be expected from the Endeavours of that Miniſter, who, unlike thoſe hollow-hearted Teachers in our SAVIOUR's time (would to GOD there were no ſuch Teachers in ours!)

who, unlike them, does as well as ſays; who preaches what he feels, and is what he preaches; whoſe Sermons are the Tranſcript of his Soul, and whoſe Life is the Enforcement of his Sermons, or rather a Sermon itſelf, expreſſing in a kind of ſilent Eloquence, more emphatic and prevailing than any Words, the very Pathos and Sublime of Virtue! And how compleat muſt the Effect be, when all is crowned with frequent and fervent Supplication to Heaven for that Illumination, Aid, and Benediction, which Heaven never refuſes to them who aſk it, and which will always lead them who obtain it, to ſtill higher Degrees of Piety and Uſefulneſs! But it is time I ſhould turn myſelf to the People.

You have heard, my Brethren of this Congregation, concerning the Duty which lies upon your Miniſter. If he perform that Duty, as I truſt he will perform it, in ſo doing he will be ſure to ſave himſelf. But he thinks not this enough. He is ambitious of ſaving you likewiſe. But remember, he cannot ſave you againſt your Wills, or without your Endeavours. He is ambitious of taking you all if poſſible to Heaven along with him. But he cannot force you to go thither. He is ready, Chriſtians, to point out the Road to you, to take you by the Hand, and to encourage you in the Way. But ſtill you muſt walk on your own Feet. You muſt work

out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling.

For inſtance now; you muſt read, hear, and meditate on the Word of GOD; you muſt worſhip him in your Cloſets and Families; you muſt catechiſe, correct, and reprove your Children, commit them to GOD, teach them to read and pray, and be good, and ſet them a godly Example; you muſt repent of your Sins, confeſs them, forſake them, and make Reparation to thoſe you have injured; you muſt live ſoberly, do juſtly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your GOD; you muſt forgive your Enemies, and do Good for Evil, do Harm to no-body, ſpeak Truth to every body, ſhew Kindneſs to one another, and do to all as you would that they ſhould do to you; and when you have done your utmoſt, you muſt account yourſelves unprofitable Servants, and fly from yourſelves to the Mercy of GOD, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, as the great Foundation of all your Hopes in Time, and of all your Happineſs in Eternity.

This, my Friends, this is your Duty; which you muſt perform with the Help of GOD, every Man among you for himſelf. Or is your Miniſter, think you, to perform it for you? What, then, can he go to Heaven for you too? Or can he anſwer for you at the Bar of God? No, no!

He muſt anſwer for himſelf, and you muſt anſwer for yourſelves. He muſt ſtand or fall to his own Maſter: ſo muſt you. It is his Buſineſs to tell you your Duty: it is your Buſineſs to do it. You expect indeed he ſhould aſſiſt you in it: you expect he ſhould love you, inſtruct you, exhort you, pray for you: you have a Right to expect it; and you may expect it. But hath he a Right to expect nothing in return; no Regard to his Character, no Attention to his Inſtructions, no Compliance with his Exhortations, no Concurrence with his Prayers? Hath the great GOD a Right to expect nothing in behalf of his Servant? Think, Sirs, of what I am going to ſay to you.

You deſired this Perſon for your Miniſter; you took the proper Meaſures for obtaining him; you perſevered in them with a commendable Spirit. You ſucceeded in your Attempts. The great GOD hath now given you what you ſought. Should you not be thankful to Him? I hope you are thankful. Take care then to ſhew it. I will tell you how. Improve well the Bleſſing you have received. If you ſhould not, the great GOD would then be angry with you. Perhaps he would take this Bleſſing away. Certainly he would puniſh you. Would he not have juſt Cauſe? Pray conſider.

When you manure, plow, ſow, and harrow your Grounds, for what End is it? That you may reap the Fruit of them, no doubt. This you do naturally and aſſuredly expect. If after all your Care, and Labour, and Expence, and Hopes, you ſhould in fact reap no Fruits from them, would you not be grievouſly diſappointed and diſſatisfyed? No queſtion, you would. Chriſtians, the chief Huſbandman, JEHOVAH himſelf, hath planted a Vineyard among you. He hath ſent forth one to labour in it, whom you have known, whom you have lived with from his very Infancy; of whoſe good Behaviour you have been conſtant Witneſſes; with whoſe miniſterial Abilities you are entirely ſatisfied; of whoſe particular Regard for you, you have doubtleſs had many Proofs; one in ſhort, who is your own free, unanimous, and affectionate Choice. May not the LORD ſay concerning you, as he ſaid concerning his antient People; 'what could have been done more to my Vine-'yard, that I have not done in it?' And may not I ſay, as the Prophet ſaid on that Occaſion; 'the LORD looks that you ſhould bring forth 'Grapes.'——Ah miſerable Vineyard, ſhould he have Cauſe to challenge thee, as that of old; 'wherefore when I looked that it ſhould bring 'forth Grapes, brought it forth nothing but 'wild Grapes;' producing only Forgetfulneſs of GOD,

God, Ignorance, Unbelief, Lying, Curſing, Swearing, Breach of Sabbath, Injuſtice, Intemperance, Selfiſhneſs, Covetouſneſs, Envy, Revenge! Read and tremble at the awful Threatening denounced in the like Caſe, *Iſ.* v. 5, 6. 'And now go to: I will tell you what I will do 'to my Vineyard: I will take away the Hedge 'thereof; and it ſhall be eaten up; and break 'down the Wall thereof; and it ſhall be trod-'den down. And I will lay it waſte: it ſhall 'not be pruned nor digged; but there ſhall 'come up Briers and Thorns. I will alſo com-'mand the Clouds that they rain no Rain upon 'it.'——Oh terrible Words! Oh dreadful Calamities! May you of this Congregation never know the Meaning of one by feeling the Weight of the other!

To conclude with my beſt Advice to you: Love and honour you Miniſter: liſten to his Doctrines: pray for his Succeſs; receive his Counſels with Pleaſure: ſubmit to his Rebukes with Meekneſs: reverence your CREATOR, your SAVIOUR, your Bible, and your Conſcience: remember all theſe require you to be good; that your Miniſter was ſent to call you to be good; and that if after all you ſhould not be good, he muſt witneſs againſt you, and they will condemn you. 'But, Beloved, we are per-'ſuaded better Things of you, and Things that

'accompany Salvation, though we thus ſpeak.' I ſhall ſay no more, but that I heartily wiſh your Miniſter and you much Comfort together in this World, and a joyful Meeting in the next, where you may live happy in GOD, and in each other for ever more. Amen.

THE END.

28 SE60

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

ACTION

PROPER FOR THE

PULPIT.

Actio in Dicendo una Dominatur. CICERO.

Qui Actione floruerunt Oratores, omne (quod aiunt) Punctum ſemper retulerunt: nec immerito eandem Eloquentiæ primariam & pene unam Virtutem agnovit Demoſthenes.

CAUSIN de Eloq.

BRITISH MUSEUM

AN

ESSAY, &c.

I Had occaſion the other Day to hear two Preachers of the moſt different Talents that can well be imagined. The Gentleman who entertained us in the Morning, is a Perſon of uncommon Parts, improved by an happy Education, of fine Taſte, and great Learning. He is quite a Maſter of the *Engliſh* Language, he ſeems to have all its Riches and Beauty at command. He preached on the *General Judgment*. There is not ſurely a more awful or a more affecting Subject, in the whole Compaſs of Religion. It turns remarkably on the *Grand* and the *Marvellous*; at the ſame time that we are all perſonally and deeply concerned in it. Our Preacher appeared ſufficiently ſenſible of this Advantage, and had taken care in his Compoſition to improve it. His Compoſition was truly maſterly. He had collected thoſe amazing Images, which the *ſacred Writings* employ in repreſenting the Conſumma-

tion of All things, and which are wonderfully adapted to aſtoniſh the Imagination, to ſhake the Conſcience, and to ſwell the Soul: he had diſpoſed them with the utmoſt Propriety: he had given every Part all that inimitable Colouring which is borrowed from the *Inſpired Authors*. The Picture was not overcharged; a Fault too common with leſs able Performers. The Figures were bold, but natural; the Ornaments noble, but unaffected, and ſuch as aroſe out of the Subject, The Character of the whole was a *Majeſtic Simplicity*. But what ſhall I ſay?— This excellent Performance had no proportionable Effect. It was unhappily placed in a bad Light. The Preacher pronounced his Diſcourſe without the leaſt Juſtneſs, Grace, or Pathos. The Conſequence was, that it made but *ſmall* Impreſſion even on his more intelligent Hearers, and *none* upon his more Inſenſible; whereas had it been properly *delivered*, it muſt have raviſhed the former, rouſed the latter, and bettered both.

He who preached in the Afternoon is a plain Man, of ordinary Capacity, little Literature, and no Refinement. He choſe for his Subject, *Repentance*. He treated it much after the common way. He ſaid good things, but nothing ſtriking or remarkable. His Method was not very judicious, nor his Style very proper. But then he *delivered* himſelf in ſo ſtrong, ſo ſignificant,

cant, and ſo agreeable a Manner, that I could eaſily perceive the whole Auditory profoundly attentive, and ſenſibly moved.

Was it poſſible on this Occaſion not to reflect on the vaſt Importance of Juſt *Action* or a Right *Manner* in the Pulpit; or not to regret, that it is ſo little minded by the Generality of Preachers? It ſeems indeed to me, that the moſt part have either never thought of it all, or that they have thought of it only as a matter of very little Conſequence, about which they need not give themſelves any Trouble, or next to none. To what can this be owing?

There are certainly many ingenious, as well as worthy, Men among the *Clergy*, who have great Abilities, both natural and acquired, and who *only want* to have theſe rightly directed, in order to be every way excellent in their Profeſſion. I myſelf know ſeveral, who with the Talents they have, if properly exerted, are capable of doing almoſt any thing with the human Heart, that is within the Power of Man. What I would be underſtood to ſpeak of here and all along, is ſimply thoſe *natural* and *moral* Impreſſions which it is in the power of one *Man* to make upon another.

With

With regard to theſe; have the Gentlemen juſt now mentioned never reflected, that Mankind are unſpeakably more influenced by their *Eyes* and their *Ears*, than by their *Underſtandings* alone; that they judge both of Men and Things chiefly from Appearance and from Feeling; that they are Then moſt apt to be convinced and touched, when the Perſon who addreſſes them ſeems to be ſo *himſelf*; that almoſt every Sentiment and Paſſion have certain Accents, Looks, and Geſtures appropriated to them by Nature, which, from the intimate Connexion She hath eſtabliſhed between the Body and the Mind, ſerve to expreſs that Sentiment or Paſſion, as their genuine *Language*, or rather to exhibit and make them viſible, as their immediate *Image*, or very *Picture*; that when thoſe therefore are joined with fit Words, the Impreſſions produced by their united Force muſt be ſtrong and lively, whereas when *They* are wanting, That muſt be weak and dull in proportion, how fit ſoever the Words may be; that accordingly, as there is the greateſt Difference imaginable between the *Manner* of a truly animated Speaker and That of an unanimated one, our Feelings in either caſe differ no leſs widely?—Are not theſe Reflections founded on the Conſtitution of Humanity; and are they not juſtified by innumerable Examples?

Can

Can the Gentlemen I ſpeak of be Strangers to theſe Reflexions, or to theſe Examples? Are not the one ſuggeſted by common Senſe, and the other confirmed by repeated Obſervation, and both one and the other of the moſt evident Importance on their Subject? Whence comes it then, that yet they profit ſo ſeldom by either?

I have no Pleaſure in finding fault with the *Clergy*. I reverence the *Order*. I am concerned for their Reputation. I love and honour every *good* Clergyman. I look on all ſuch as among the moſt valuable Members of Society. I am concerned, when any of that Number are not at pains to acquit themſelves of any part of their Function, ſo handſomely or ſucceſsfully as could be deſired. I have heard many Preachers, with conſiderable Pleaſure and Improvement: I have heard ſome, with the higheſt Rapture and Advantage: why have I not heard more?

We ſee abundance of People, who expreſs themſelves very properly in *Company*: we ſee not a few manly, ſpirited, and decent Speakers at the *Bar*, on the *Bench*, and in the *Parliament*: we know ſeveral excellent and ſome wonderful Actors on the *Stage*. What is the reaſon, that we ſee ſo few becoming, natural, pathetic *Preachers*? Is the PULPIT alone an Enemy to Beauty

Beauty of Addreſs, Truth of Expreſſion, and Harmony of Sound? Muſt *Art*, *Nature*, and the *Graces* have nothing to do with SACRED Eloquence? Or are not the Profeſſors of it to borrow all the Aſſiſtances thoſe can lend, in order to render it more perfect, and by conſequence more efficacious? Are they not to employ every Method conſiſtent with their Character, by which they may recommend Religion more powerfully? Are the Methods above-mentioned inconſiſtent with their Character? If the Preacher from the Throne ſought to find out acceptable *Words*, why may not his more humble Succeſſors ſeek to find out acceptable *Ways* of *expreſſing* them? It is certain, that to give Words their true Value, Luſtre and Effect, it is neceſſary to accompany them with Propriety of Action. Many a good *Sentiment*, and I may venture to add, many a good *Sermon*, is loſt for want of attending to this important Maxim.

It cannot indeed be denied, that *Senſe* and *Truth* are ſtill the ſame, in whatever way they may be uttered. They ſtill claim Regard on account of their own intrinſic Value. And they will meet with it on that account ſingly, from Minds perceptive enough to know, and ingenuous enough to own them, even in the moſt homely Dreſs. But would they not meet with

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it ſtill more, in a Dreſs more agreeable? Are even the moſt perceptive and ingenuous Minds at all times ſufficiently attentive to good Inſtruction, and ſufficiently impreſſed by it, however it may happen to be delivered? Do even the Beſt Men never need to be excited, to have their Senſe of Divine things quickened, and their Love to them enflamed? Or will the moſt Intelligent Hearers be as much pleaſed and touched with a Diſcourſe delivered coldly or ungracefully, as with the *ſame* Diſcourſe, or even an *inferior* one, accompanied with all the Beauty and Force of *Action*?

It will not, I think, be pretended that any of our Preachers have often occaſion to addreſs more ſagacious, learned, or polite Aſſemblies, than thoſe which were compoſed of the *Roman Senate*, or the *Athenian People*, in their moſt enlightened Times. But it is well known what great Streſs the moſt celebrated Orators of thoſe Times laid on *Action*, how exceeding imperfect they reckoned Eloquence without it, and what Wonders they performed with its Aſſiſtance, performed upon the greateſt, firmeſt, moſt ſenſible, and moſt elegant Spirits the World ever ſaw: It were eaſy to throw together a number of *Common-place* Quotations, in Support or Illuſtration of this, and almoſt every other, Remark that can be made upon the preſent Subject. But as that would

would lead us beyond the Intention of this Paper, we need only recollect here one ſimple Fact, which every body hath heard of; that whereas DEMOSTHENES himſelf did not ſucceed in his firſt Attempts, through his having neglected to ſtudy *Action*, he afterwards arrived at ſuch a Pitch in that Faculty, that when the People of *Rhodes* expreſſed in high Terms their Admiration of his famous Oration for CTESIPHON, upon hearing it read with a very ſweet and ſtrong Voice by ÆSCHINES, whoſe Baniſhment it had procured, that great and candid Judge ſaid to them, "How "would you have been affected, had you *ſeen* "him ſpeak it! For he that *only hears* DEMOST-"HENES loſes much the Better Part of the "Oration."—What an honourable Teſtimony this, from a vanquiſhed Adverſary, and ſuch an Adverſary! What a noble Idea doth it give of that wonderful Orator's *Action!* I graſp it with Ardour; I tranſport myſelf in Imagination to *Old Athens*. I mingle with the *Popular Aſſembly*, I behold the Lightning, I liſten to the Thunder of DEMOSTHENES. I feel my Blood thrilled, I ſee the Auditory toſt and ſhaken like ſome deep Foreſt by a mighty Storm. I am filled with Wonder at ſuch marvellous Effects. I am hurried almoſt out of myſelf. In a little while, I endeavour to be more recollected. Then I conſider the Orator's Addreſs. I find the whole in-

expreſſible.

expreſſible. But nothing ſtrikes me more than his *Action*. I perceive the various Paſſions he would inſpire riſing in him by turns, and working from the Depth of his Frame. Now he glows with the Love of the Public; now he flames with Indignation at its Enemies; then he ſwells with Diſdain of its falſe, indolent, or intereſted Friends; anon he melts with Grief for its Misfortunes; and now he turns pale with Fear of yet greater ones. Every Feature, Nerve, and Circumſtance about him is intenſely animated: each almoſt ſeems as if it would ſpeak. I diſcern his inmoſt Soul, I ſee it as only clad in ſome thin tranſparent Vehicle. It is all on fire. I wonder no longer at the *Effects* of ſuch Eloquence: I only wonder at their *Cauſe*.——————But to return from this Excurſion.

Suppoſe, if you will, that a graceful and enlivened *Manner* in the Pulpit, were no ways neceſſary for Serious and Underſtanding Hearers; are all the Hearers of that Character? Will the more Careleſs and Inſenſible afford their Attention, without having it either *charmed* or *extorted* from them? Or will they enter into the moſt refined Truth, and the moſt ſpiritual Affections, unleſs thoſe are ſtrongly pointed out, and rendered in a manner palpable to their Senſes? Are the Generality of Mankind ſo much diſpoſed to love

love Religion, for the ſake of her more inward and hidden Beauties, that ſhe needs no external Ornaments to allure them? Her *Advocates*, alas! ſhould conſider that they are employed to plead her Cauſe before Judges who are often ſtrongly prejudiced againſt Her; that it is therefore their Buſineſs to remove, if poſſible, thoſe Prejudices, by not only ſhewing their fair *Client* in her moſt attractive Lights, but by practiſing all the Graces of captivating Eloquence, all the honeſt Wiles that a juſt Rhetoric teaches for catching the Attention, and ſtealing upon the Heart. In ſhort, they are to take their Hearers as they find them, to accommodate themſelves to their Diſpoſitions, and ſeize thoſe Handles which Nature hath formed in them. If their *Eyes* and *Ears* can be made ſubſervient to their Reformation, why not ſtudy to pleaſe both?——It was ſaid of the moſt Divine Preacher that ever appeared in our World, *Grace was poured into his Lips*; by which Expreſſion I am informed the beſt Interpreters underſtand that Eloquence, and inſinuating Sweetneſs, which flowed through his whole Addreſs and Manners. Methinks all his *Servants* ſhould imitate their *Maſter* as well in this, as in every other Part of his great Example.

Forgive my Freedom, *Gentlemen!* Is it poſſible that any of you can ſeriouſly think a whineing

ing Voice, an aukward Stiffneſs, or an unmeaning Motion in the Pulpit, are the beſt Means to recommend CHRIST's Religion? I am ſure they will never recommend it to Hearers of Taſte and Judgment. But is it not your Duty to become All things to all Men, like the amiable and eloquent Apoſtle PAUL, that you may by all means ſave ſome? Are you not, in the ſame way that he was, Debtors to the learned *Greek*, no leſs than to the illiterate *Barbarian*, to the *Wiſe* no leſs than to the *Unwiſe*? You will perhaps ſay, that the latter are much the greateſt Part of your Hearers, and therefore are moſt to be conſidered. Are you certain, then, that the greateſt Part are more pleaſed and more affected with ſuch a *Delivery*, than they would be with one more juſt and natural? How do you know, *Gentlemen*, unleſs you had fairly tried?——The Majority have not *Taſte* or *Judgment*: true, but they have *Eyes* and *Ears*: they can diſtinguiſh ſhrewdly between Geſtures that have a *Meaning*, and Geſtures that have *none*, between Sounds that are the *Voice* of Nature, and Sounds that are *not*: they can tell with wonderful Exactneſs when the Preacher looks ſerious or trifling, in earneſt or indifferent: they *feel* all this; though they cannot account for thoſe Feelings, and never indeed think of accounting for them. In ſhort, they have original Perceptions of Truth

and

and Nature, which all their Ignorance and Grosſneſs cannot extinguiſh. *Touch* theſe Perceptions, and you are ſure to *affect* them: touch them *agreeably*, and you are ſure to *pleaſe* them. The Inſtrument is perhaps none of the beſt; but the neceſſary Strings are there: and ſome Muſic they will afford, if played upon with Skill. Say not therefore the Inſtrument is good for nothing, to excuſe, your improper Manner of handling it: If you can draw forth no agreeable Airs even from the *Vulgar* Mind, I doubt it is becauſe you are not Maſters of this Intellectual Muſic.——— But in reality, *Gentlemen*, the more indifferent the Inſtrument is, the greater Skill is required to handle it. The more Mankind are ſunk in the Lethargy of Senſe and Folly, the leſs Need have they to be lulled into a deeper Sleep, by a languid or careleſs way of addreſſing them; and the more evident is the Neceſſity of rouſing and ſhaking them by all the Thunder of a bold and irreſiſtible Eloquence.

Hiſtory affords numberleſs Inſtances how far the *People* are capable of being moved by Eloquence in general, and by That part of it in particular, which in the largeſt Senſe of the Word may be called ACTION. The Republics of *Greece* and *Rome* abound perhaps with the moſt numerous Examples of this, eſpecially from the

e Roſtrum, where their Form of Government ve the happieſt Opportunities for Eloquence to ſplay her Magic. But later Days have not en altogether barren: Our own may juſtly aſt of a ſurpriſing Inſtance of true and maſterly loquence in a Perſon now alive, and who akes the greateſt Figure in his Profeſſion. I all be underſtood here to mean Mr. MURRAY, ho joins to the moſt engaging Manner of eaking, the Art of preſenting his Subject in a ight and Language ſo clear and flowing, and the ſame time ſo ſtriking and ſpirited, that if s Eloquence or Pleadings have not produced ffects equal to thoſe recorded of CICERO or EMOSTHENES, it may be accounted for by flecting on the Circumſtances of the different ges in which they lived. He is ſo filled with s Subject likewiſe, that he ſeems often to be at loſs to determine which of his Ideas ought to preferred, and which omitted in his Plead- gs: None of the Maſters of Eloquence that know or read of poſſeſſed this peculiar Talent t DEMOSTHENES.

The *Theatre* too affords an Example of the me Thing. Every body knows the amazing d univerſal Influence of this Talent, in the e of GARRICK, who by poſſeſſing it in an inent degree, is able to alarm and ſoothe, to inflame

inflame and melt by turns a mixed and numerous Audience; to torture or tranſport them at Pleaſure: he ſeems in ſhort upon the Stage to have a kind of deſpotic Empire over the human Paſſions, not over thoſe alone of the more *refined* Hearers, but thoſe too of the more *vulgar*, both ſmall and great. We may obſerve by the way, what low and ſilly things ſome ingenious Players can raiſe and dignify, merely by their Manner of *ſpeaking* them.

I appeal likewiſe to what we ſee in the *Pulpit*. For there too we ſometimes meet with an agreeable *Addreſs*. When we do, what is the Effect? Why, we liſten with uncommon Attention: we are ſeized, delighted, touched: we are ſorry when the Preacher hath done: we almoſt wiſh him to begin again: on our Return home we recollect with Pleaſure what he ſaid: we admire, we applaud him. Is not this a Proof that the *People* are not inſenſible of the Beauties of becoming *Delivery*? Were they to meet with it more frequently, I doubt not but they would grow ſtill more ſenſible of theſe: they would even contract ſome Taſte in proceſs of time: they would conceive an increaſing Fondneſs for the moſt decent and animated Preachers, and come at laſt to feel with Rapture the finer Strokes of a correct, a ſpirited, and noble Utterance.

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What if I ſhould even appeal to that which happens in the caſe of ſome of our moſt indifferent Preachers? So long as they continue to deliver themſelves in their uſual Faſhion, you may obſerve the Bulk of their Hearers liſtleſs and inattentive, ſome of them aſleep, moſt of them trifling. But if at any time, towards the End of their Diſcourſe, for inſtance, they appear *warmer* than ordinary, and, by feeling more ſtrongly and more truly, leave for a little their unmoved Look, unnatural Tone, and unaffecting Geſtures, and talk with Seriouſneſs, Plainneſs, and Pathos; you ſhall inſtantly ſee the whole Auditory awake, ſome of them getting on their Feet, others of them ſtarting as out of a Dream, ſome it may be gaping with Eagerneſs, and all huſhed into a ſilent Suſpence, that is only now and then perhaps interrupted with involuntary Sighs.—But if it unhappily falls out, that the Preachers I ſpeak of ſink again before the Cloſe, into their old Manner, preſently the Attention flags, and a general Diſſipation ſpreads once more over the Aſſembly.

It will not, I hope, be imagined from any thing I have ſaid, that I mean to recommend *Action* as ſeparate from *Truth* and *Reaſon*, the only natural Sources of Perſuaſion. It muſt ſtill

ſtill be remembered, that *Action* is of real Uſe and Value, no farther than it diſpoſes Men to attend to the Evidences, and enables them to feel the Force of *Truth* and *Reaſon*. In reality, *that Action* alone is juſt, which is a genuine Exhibition of *Nature*, which repreſents her Feelings and Perceptions, and gives to theſe a Voice and Body. And it is *ſuch Action* only that will, I believe, be found to make any thorough or durable Impreſſion.

If this Maxim is not attended to, a Preacher may fret and agitate himſelf to death, without ever touching his Hearers. Or on the other hand, his *Manner* may be ſmooth and genteel, and yet notwithſtanding have as little Effect. No *Action* will have Effect, that carries with it the Appearance of *Art*. Wherever we obſerve ſuch an Appearance, we are ſure immediately to be upon our guard: the Deſign miſcarries the Moment it is perceived: we conſider the Preacher as at beſt a mere *Declaimer*, ambitious of ſhewing his *own* Talents, not as a feeling *Speaker*, ſolicitous to promote *our* Inſtruction; a Sentiment that never fails of breeding Diſguſt. Therefore, the Preacher that would pleaſe and ſtrike to the Purpoſe, muſt ſeem in this reſpect totally to forget *himſelf*, to mind his Subject and his Hearers alone; in a word, to be entirely ſwallowed up in a deep Concern for the great

Intereſts of Religion and of Souls. Whatever Art he employs to enforce and ſet off his Addreſſes with the higher Advantage, muſt be thrown out of ſight from the Beginning, and kept concealed all along, under an Air of grave Simplicity. In ſhort, it muſt be managed ſo finely as to appear quite *natural:* A ſacred, invariable, eternal Rule in every Species of public Speaking, that is intended to perſuade! A Rule which runs through every Part of Eloquence, without Exception; but is of greater Conſequence in no Part of it, than in That now under Conſideration.

From this Supreme Rule all the Subordinate Precepts relating to *Action*, as well in the Pulpit, as every where elſe, do immediately take their Riſe. Where it is faithfully obſerved, theſe will come in of courſe, be practiſed almoſt inſenſibly, and blend ſo happily with the Preacher's Feelings, that the Reſult of all will be an alluring Image of what is called BEAUTIFUL NATURE.

Something of the ſame kind takes place upon the *Stage*. I have heard, that the late Mrs. PORTER, ſo highly celebrated in many capital Parts, where the Eloquence of her Pronunciation, Look, and Geſture, moved Aſtoniſhment, uſed to declare, that ſhe left her *Action* to riſe

out of the Sentiments in the Parts ſhe perform-ed.—What is ſtill more ſurpriſing on the Theatre is this, Even a profligate Actor ſhall ſometimes, by the Stretch of Genius merely, ſuſtain with prodigious Succeſs the moſt worthy Character. Indeed it is evident in this Caſe, that *ſuch* an Actor muſt in a manner quit *himſelf* during his Performance, and, by a ſort of temporary Transformation, *aſſume* that worthy Character which he perſonates. But now a virtuous Actor, ſuppoſing his Genius equal, hath manifeſtly an unſpeakable Advantage here. He doth not need to ſtep out of himſelf into an oppoſite kind of Being: he *is* already in ſome meaſure what he *repreſents*: You ſee in this Inſtance the *Man* rather than the *Actor*: the Paſſions riſe and ſtream freely in his Mind. His inward Senſations give a Stamp of Feeling and Spirit to his Execution, that muſt render it proportionably perfect. So powerful a Miſtreſs is *Nature!* In truth, *Nature* muſt ſtill be Miſtreſs, even in the Works of *Art* themſelves. *Art*, in general, is only her *Handmaid*, whoſe Buſineſs and Glory it is to follow and miniſter to that ſovereign *Directreſs*.

What a Superiority in this way ought the *Preacher*, by his very Profeſſion, to have over every *other* Performer! It is his immediate Province

vince to recommend Virtue to *others*. It is particularly expected of him, that he ſhould love it *himſelf*. If he really doth love it as he ought, and hath the other requiſite Talents, then is he peculiarly qualified to recommend it. Accordingly he will recommend it with an Energy and Expreſſion, that muſt needs ſurpaſs the higheſt Reaches of Art: he will break, with a noble Freedom, through every thing ſtiff and formal, and bear upon his Audience with all the Force and Majeſty of *Action*.

He muſt not expect, however, to eſcape Cenſure, let him ſtand in what Rank of Excellence he will. Nay, the more juſt and pathetic his *Manner* is, he may lay his account to meet with the greater Cenſure from half-thinking captious People. They will be apt for that very Reaſon to pronounce him *theatrical*. Perhaps they never ſaw the Theatre in their Life, and really know nothing of the Matter; but they have taken it into their Heads to paſs that Reflection on every Preacher whoſe *Action* is more natural and ſpirited than ordinary. But there is without all queſtion a wide Difference between that *Action* which ſuits the *Theatre*, and that which becomes the *Pulpit*. The former is much more bold, more diverſified, and more unconfined, than the latter; as the Thea-

tre admits of a much greater Strength, Variety, and Extent of Paſſion, than the Pulpit. The former may and ought, in many Caſes, to riſe to a Violence, a Rage, a Fury on the one hand, and to ſink into a low and comic Strain on the other, which the latter doth utterly exclude. There is doubtleſs a Solemnity and a Sanctity of *Manner*, from which the Pulpit ought Never to depart. But muſt not theſe be tempered with a certain Inſinuation and Familiary? The Grave and the Dignified ought ſtill to predominate. But muſt the Vigorous and the Lively be therefore baniſhed? Is there any Incompatibility between thoſe Things? I apprehend, not.

It is abundantly plain, that the *religious* Paſſions, as well as all *other* Paſſions, have certain peculiar Features, Tones, and Geſtures, originally adapted to them in Nature, which, when they are put forth into Act, they will readily aſſume, if under no Reſtraint. In this Caſe *theſe* will be more or leſs marked or diſtinguiſhable, in proportion to the Depth and Force with which *thoſe* are felt. The more deeply and forcibly that the religious Paſſions are felt by the Preacher, it is allowed, I think, to be ſo much the better. Will it not thence follow, that the more ſenſibly and ſtrongly they appear about

him, by their correſpondent Features, Tones, and Geſtures, he is ſo much the more valuable and accompliſhed in his Profeſſion?

If *Religion* be indeed that lovely Form her Miniſters repreſent her, it cannot ſure be any Diſadvantage to her, to have her Image reflected from *their* Deportment *in* the Pulpit, as well as *out* of it. When they ſeem all poſſeſſed, expanded, exalted with thoſe beautiful and ſublime Perceptions which *ſhe* inſpires; when their Countenances brighten, and their Eyes glow with her ſacred Spirit; when their Voice, if I may be allowed the Expreſſion, is only an *Eccho* to her's, and every Motion is but the *Rebound*, ſo to ſpeak, of her divine Impulſes; is it poſſible for the Auditors, if they have any Remains of Ingenuity, not to be charmed into Love, or awed into Veneration? Do they not become in this Inſtance *Spectators*, as well as *Auditors?* And is not what a great Ancient ſo nobly imagined concerning VIRTUE, turned into a kind of Reality with regard to her celeſtial Parent and Nurſe? RELIGION, RELIGION herſelf, appears in ſome ſort *viſible* to Mortals. And when ſhe doth ſo, when ſhe is beheld as it were breathing, moving, and acting before them with all her native Energies and Graces, ſhe muſt ſurely raiſe the greateſt Admiration!

Who that hath any Senſibility of Nature, I do not ſay Elegance of Taſte, can view with Indifference the wonderful Airs of devout Tranſport, Joy, Sorrow, Compaſſion, Aſtoniſhment, and the like, which a RAPHAEL, a RUBENS, an HANNIBAL CARRACCI, and many more, have given their different Figures, in thoſe admirable Pieces wherein they have treated religious Subjects? To mention but one Piece of the firſt and greateſt of theſe Maſters, *Prints* of which every body hath ſeen; and which relates immediately to our preſent Argument; none will wonder at the ſilent, deep Attention, and Rapture, which appear in St. PAUL's Hearers at *Athens*; who conſiders that truly divine Orator, as he is there drawn by the Painter, looking with ſuch a Face of Inſpiration and impetuous Ardour, and ſeeming to pour forth a whole Tempeſt of ſacred Eloquence, accompanied with the boldeſt and moſt majeſtic Action it is poſſible to imagine. Thoſe who are acquainted with the Genius and Style of RAPHAEL, are generally, I believe, of Opinion, that never any Artiſt of the kind ſtudied more accurately, or copied more truly, the EXPRESSION of *Nature*, in all her Variety of Paſſions, and Movements; not to ſpeak of the matchleſs Grace, which that Favourite of the *Graces* diffuſed

fuſed ſo copiouſly over his Works. I am indeed aware that your Connoiſſeurs on this Subject, think the *Apoſtle*'s Arms raiſed too high, in the noble Figure I ſpeak of. I ſhall not diſpute that Circumſtance. It will be allowed however in the main no improper Picture of the ſtrong Contention of his Soul, which claims, I think, ſome Allowance. It is probable, likewiſe, that the warm Manner of the *Italian* Preachers gave RAPHAEL the Idea of ſo elevated an Attitude of the Arms and Hands.

Upon the whole therefore, I would conclude, that thoſe have not thoroughly conſidered the Subject, nor duly attended to the Human Conſtitution, and the proper Methods of applying to it, who object againſt *Pulpit-Action* in general, as I am told many Preachers do. To object againſt ſuch *Action* as is merely *ſtudied* or *artificial*, is certainly juſt, on the Principles now laid down; for *ſuch Action* will never appear truly *natural*; but *that* is the very fault we condemn; and what we ſay is this, in ſo many Words, that Study is only to be employed in a Conformity and Subſerviency to Nature, and Art only uſed as her *Organ*, through which ſhe is to ſpeak; or her *Inſtrument*, by which ſhe is to perform her Operations.

I will readily own indeed, that no *Action* at all would be greatly preferable to what we too often ſee in the Pulpit; than which it is not to be diſſembled, that nothing can be more Unnatural, or Unmeaning.——But after all, how ſhould it be otherwiſe? Moſt of thoſe who enter into the *Church*, enter, I humbly conceive, too early; that is, before they have had Time or Opportunity to lay in a Fund of Knowledge and Obſervation; before they have got any tolerable Acquaintance with themſelves, with Religion, with Human Nature, or with Human Life; before they have contracted a ſedate and manly Turn; before they have thought with any juſt Attention on the great End and vaſt Importance of Preaching, or perhaps ſtudied at all the Principles and Rules of that Divine Art; in ſhort, before either their *Hearts*, their *Underſtandings*, or their *Taſtes*, are in any meaſure formed. What can be expected from ſuch raw Beginners? Muſt they not unavoidably run into a *falſe* Manner? And how ſoon will that grow into an *Habit?* And how difficult is it to conquer an *ill* Habit, ſuppoſing one becomes ſenſible of it; which happens, I doubt, but ſeldom in the Caſe before us?

Yet when I meet with any more ingenious young Preacher than uſual, one who ſeems to

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ſet out on a better Plan, to have a juſt Aim, and a laudable Ambition, I can overlook a thouſand things that may be amiſs at firſt. In a Buſineſs ſo extremely delicate, he muſt inevitably fall into ſeveral Miſtakes for ſome time. But in proportion as his Fancy mellows, as his Experience grows, as the Levity of Youth abates, and as his Judgment of Men and Things, as well as his Acquaintance with GOD and GOODNESS, improves, he will ſettle into an happier Form; he will come down from his exceſſive Flights, wear off every day ſomething weak and juvenile, and acquire at length a maſculine, chaſte, and graceful *Manner*.

It is indeed impoſſible, that he can acquire this all at once, even allowing him to be poſſeſſed of Uncommon Abilities and Improvements. It muſt neceſſarily be ſome time, before he can arrive at that Preſence of Mind, which is indiſpenſably requiſite to ſpeaking well; before he can know the juſt Pitch of his Voice, and what Extent of Sound is neceſſary to fill a Public Aſſembly; before he can form a proper Judgment of what is moſt pleaſing, and moſt efficacious; in fine, before he can contract an eaſy, free, habitual Command of his Thoughts, Words, and whole Deameanour. If he *reads*, the continual Attention he muſt give to his *Notes*, will

fetter and embaraſs him greatly: if he *recites*, his Memory, unleſs it is extraordinary good, will labour ſo frequently, at leaſt the Care of Recollecting his Diſcourſe will engroſs him ſo much, as to leave him little or no room to mind the *Delivery* of it. In either caſe, his *Delivery* will appear ſtarched and aukward.

Add to this, that Preachers in general are apt, in their firſt Attempts, to be more concerned about diſplaying their Parts, and appearing *fine* Preachers, as it is termed, than about entering deeply and warmly into the Intereſts of their Hearers, and being really *uſeful* Preachers; ſo that thoſe Attempts look like ſo many Trials of Skill, or Pieces of Declamation, rather than ſerious and affectionate Addreſſes to the People, coming from their *own* Hearts, and directed to *theirs*. Indeed there is nothing in Life harder to overcome, eſpecially in a young Mind, than the Love of *Shining*; as there is perhaps no Paſſion that derives more immediately from that Self-love, which in its Exceſs I take to be one of the profoundeſt and ſtrongeſt Corruptions of our Nature. To overcome it, certainly requires great Self-denial, a Virtue of difficult and ſlow Attainment. Self-diſtruſt, a *Siſter-Grace*, not eaſily neither nor quickly come at, is no leſs neceſſary here. Preachers, like Authors, are, I ſuſpect, but in-

different Judges of their own Performances. If they are not endowed with ſingular Modeſty, they will oftentimes be apt to think That excellent, which in reality is far otherwiſe; to flatter themſelves they are got to the very Top of the Art, when, alas! they are many, many Degrees ſhort of it; at leaſt to apprehend in themſelves but *inconſiderable* Failures, when their Hearers, more impartial Judges, happen to perceive in them very *important* ones. The Conſequence is manifeſt.

Beſides this, it is only the modeſt Man that will liſten to the Criticiſms of others, or that will improve by them. To be willing to *hear* our Faults, is an high Strain of Humility: to be willing to *mend* them, is ſtill an higher. How few of us are *great* enough to practiſe either!

But ſuppoſe a Preacher ever ſo modeſt, how rare is it to meet with any who are capable of criticizing with real Taſte and Friendſhip!—Happy, thrice happy that Preacher who finds but *One* ſuch Perſon, among all his Acquaintance! He hath found a Diamond of the firſt Water, as valuable as it is rare. Let him look on *ſuch* a Friend, as one of the moſt precious Gifts of Heaven, as an ineſtimable Treaſure. Let him *grapple him to his Soul with Hooks of Steel*,

to

to uſe the Words of a well known, but never enough admired Poet. There is no Blemiſh he may not correct, no Improvement he may not attain, with the Aſſiſtance of *ſuch* a Friend, provided he have the Fortitude to employ him freely, and the Senſe to hearken to him attentively. It will be eaſily ſuppoſed, that we do not exclude the Aſſiſtance of Genius, of Application, or of Piety. Theſe are all apparently neceſſary to raiſe him to any pitch of Perfection. We may add to theſe one or more good Models: not that he is to be a ſervile Imitator of any Model whatſoever, but only to take proper Hints from thence, to enrich and compleat his Native Fund; and, whilſt he tranſcribes the Beauties of other Performers into his own Manner, to give them a peculiar Turn that ſhall render them in effect *new* and *original*.

It is likewiſe requiſite, that he form to himſelf an exalted Conception of his Art; which, if I may uſe ſo bold a Compariſon, will reſemble in ſome ſenſe that eternal Idea, according to which a ſublime Philoſopher repreſents the *Almighty* as framing this majeſtic Univerſe. This is that grand Architype, or ſovereign Pattern, which our divine Artiſt is to carry continually in his Mind, and after which, by a ſort of hidden *plaſtic* Power he is to mould his Productions. I believe

believe indeed it is difficult to *conceive* ſo refined an Idea, and ſtill more difficult to *expreſs* it; but certainly the greateſt Difficulty of all is to reduce it to *Practice*. The great Maſters and Models of *Antiquity*, furniſh us with the beſt Lights concerning it. Therefore he who would wiſh to enter into it thoroughly, ought to conſult with the utmoſt Care their inimitable Works; juſt as thoſe who would excel in *Painting* or *Statuary*, muſt attentively view and review the *Antique*, in order to form their Taſte on it, as the undiſputed Standard of perfect Beauty.

What Pity is it, that inſtead of being at pains to obtain by proper Study thoſe beautiful and elevated Conceptions, that would inſpire the nobleſt Performances, the Preachers of ſo divine a Religion as ours, ſhould ſo often content themſelves with taking up by chance whatever low or miſtaken Notions of their Art come in their way! Thus, for inſtance, in what relates to the *Modulation* of the Voice; can any thing be more improper than That which we frequently hear from the Pulpit? What ſhall we ſay of that violent Vociferation, which ſometimes hurts, nay ſhocks the Ear? Nothing ſurely can be more painful to Hearers of the ſmalleſt Delicacy, or more contrary to all the Rules of public Speaking.—Some again deliver ſo precipitately, as

quite

quite to confound the very beſt Compoſitions. They put one in mind of a *School-Boy* repeating his Leſſon. They ſeem impatient to finiſh their Taſk: therefore they hurry it over; no matter how, ſo they can but get to the End of it. Is it poſſible they ſhould either pleaſe or profit their Hearers? Methinks a Diſcourſe ſo delivered may be compared to a Land-flood, which pours along furiouſly for a little, but is quickly over, and leaves all behind it bare and waſte, affording neither Entertainment whilſt it laſts, nor Advantage afterwards; whereas the ſame Diſcourſe, pronounced with a proper Grace and Deliberation, might reſemble ſome gently flowing River, which at once delights the attentive Beholder, and refreſhes all the neighbouring Fields.

A deliberate Pronunciation hath many Advantages. It looks ſerious and weighty. It allows the *Speaker* time to enter into the ſeveral Parts of his Performance, with Fullneſs, Diſtinctneſs, and Recollection; to give every Sentence and Word its proper Turn and Emphaſis; to obſerve as he goes along, in what manner his Hearers are affected; to ſuit himſelf to them accordingly; and to manage his Force as he finds occaſion, ſo as not to run himſelf out, but to reſerve ſufficient Strength and Spirit for winding up his Exerciſe, with a Pathos that ſhall riſe and grow to the very End.——

End.——By this means too, the *Hearer* hath Leiſure to conſider and to feel every thing that is ſaid, and is not obliged to ſtrain his Attention, in order to keep pace with the Preacher. Not but the *latter* may frequently with Propriety run into a more rapid or accelerated Utterance; that is, when he is hurried away with the Impetuoſity of his Sentiments: and this may have a good effect upon the *former*, to warm, to fire, to tranſport him; provided he hath been properly wrought up before. Beſides, the Deliberation I talk of, is by no means to keep in one conſtant regular Tenor, but is to be uſed in very different degrees, according to the different Movements of the Preacher's Mind through the ſeveral Periods of his Diſcourſe.

He will proceed in That with greater Eaſe and Succeſs, if he makes frequent *Pauſes*. Theſe will indeed afford equal Relief to himſelf and to his Audience. Then, they will take off the Air of Declamation which a *continued* Addreſs is ſo apt to carry. They will bring it nearer to *Life*, and add an Importance and Solemnity to the Whole. When on any more momentous Topic in particular, they are or appear to be occaſioned by the Difficulty of expreſſing ſome great Idea, that labours in the Preacher's Boſom, and ſtruggles as it were for vent, they have commonly in that

that caſe a marvellous Impreſſion. Such a Silence is more eloquent than any Words.

This Deliberation and theſe Pauſes, are things widely different from that drawling and droniſh Pronunciation we ſometimes meet with, where every Word ſeems to freeze in the Preacher's Mouth, and the Hearer is tired out with tedious Expectation. No wonder if ſuch a leaden Languor in the one, produces a lazy Liſtleſſneſs in the other; juſt as one Perſon's Yawning ſhall occaſion a general Yawn through a whole Company. How unfriendly ſuch a *Delivery* is to all the Purpoſes of Perſuaſion, the leaſt Reflexion or Obſervation will ſhew.

There is a *Delivery*, the reverſe of this, which though not quite ſo diſagreeable, is, yet perhaps as little calculated to perſuade; and that is, where the Preacher runs over his Diſcourſe much in the ſame ſuperficial way, in which he would read a *News-paper*, or any other thing of eqnal indifference; with a careleſs Voice, that is unchanged alike in Tone or in Time, and that moves on and on in one even dull Track to the laſt; a kind of Pronunciation not more ungrateful to the Ear, than unaffecting to the Soul, which naturally loves Action and Variety in every thing, and wants always to be entertained, awakened, and intereſted.

But

But the moſt prevailing Error in this affair, is the uſing a certain inſipid, and unvaried Set of Notes, through which the Preacher runs perpetually, without any Care to adapt the Sound to the Senſe, or to lay the Accent on the proper Place. It is truly ſurpriſing to ſee how few even of our beſt Preachers themſelves are free from this Fault. Now I ſay, that however Cuſtom may reconcile us the Hearers to ſuch a *Manner*, nothing in itſelf can be more prepoſterous or unnatural. Was one to *ſing* every thing he uttered in Converſation, at the Bar, or on the Bench, would he not appear highly ridiculous? Was an Actor, to *ſing* his Speeches inſtead of *ſpeaking* them, would he not be hiſſed off the Stage? Is not the Practice of your Heroes, and other Perſonages, ſinging their Parts in the *Opera*, manifeſtly attended with an Abſurdity, that would be inſufferable, were it not for the Enchantment of the Muſic, and the Splendour of the Scenes? Why then is the Practice of *ſinging* Sermons admitted into the Pulpit? The Impropriety of it may be very eaſily ſhewn.

Is a Man angry, ſurpriſed, ſad, or joyful, on any occaſion; doth he fall immediately into a *Monotony?* No ſuch thing. His Voice and Pronunciation do naturally and inſenſibly accommodate

modate themſelves to the preſent Paſſion, are raiſed or depreſſed, ſtrong or tender, quick or ſlow, juſt as that inſpires and governs. Whatever Variation that may receive, it will inſtantly communicate the ſame to *theſe*. Even its different Degrees, and Mixtures, ſhall be perceived in the different Keys, and Tones it adopts. Much more will *different* Paſſions expreſs themſelves by a ſenſible Diverſity of Sounds. Inſomuch that thoſe Sounds alone, without the aid of Words, ſhall often give the Hearer a ſtriking Idea of this or that particular Paſſion; nay ſhall irreſiſtibly excite in him the very ſame Paſſion, by a ſort of ſympathetic Impulſe ariſing from the Conſtitution of human Minds, that are attuned by Nature to one another.

But now ſuppoſe a Man ſhould pretend to be angry, for example, and ſhould uſe Words ſignifying Diſpleaſure, but in pronouncing thoſe ſhould employ ſuch Sounds and Accents as are expreſſive of Approbation, or of any other Feeling diſtinct from that Anger; would the Man in ſuch a caſe be believed or regarded? I think, not.——This puts me in mind of a Paſſage in TULLY, abundantly applicable here. M. CALLIDIUS, a noted Pleader in *Rome*, accuſed Q. GALLIUS of an Attempt to poiſon him, and ſaid he was ready to prove it by a Variety of Evidence, but talked of

of it in a languid Voice, and frigid Manner. Our Orator, who appeared for the Defendant, takes hold of this very Circumſtance, and improves it with his uſual Art to render the whole improbable: "Tu iſtuc, M. CALLIDI, niſi fingeres "ſic ageres? Præſertim cum iſtâ Eloquentiâ "*alienorum* Hominum Pericula defendere acer-"rime ſoleas, *tuum* negligeres? Ubi Dolor, ubi "Ardor Animi, qui etiam ex Infantium Ingeniis "elicere Voces & Querelas ſolet?"

This is certain, that the Language of the Paſſions is an Univerſal Language, underſtood by all Mankind, both young and old; as far as thoſe do originally influence the Turns of the Voice, the Airs of the Countenance, or the Geſtures of the Body; it will of courſe follow, that where the Turns of the Voice are ſuch as expreſs nothing, that is, convey no Idea of what is felt, or ſuppoſed to be felt, by the Speaker, there the Pronunciation, the Utterance is bad, and can tend neither to convince nor move. But what Expreſſion can we imagine in an entirely uniform and ever-returning Tune or Cadence, employed alike on all Occaſions, for all Purpoſes whatſoever; like a *Chime* of Bells, that clink continually upon the Ear, in one weariſome, unvaried, uninterrupted Tenour?

To

To bring the matter ſtill more home; I will ſuppoſe a Clergyman addreſſes me in private, to admoniſh me of ſome Miſcarriage, or to preſs upon me ſome Duty, and that inſtead of talking with his natural Voice, plainly, feelingly, and familiarly, he falls immediately into an artificial Cadence, goes on whining and canting from Sentence to Sentence, laying the Emphaſis at one time on an unmeaning *if*, and at another time on an as unmeaning *and*, juſt as either occurs at a particular Note, or Part of the Song, and running over, without any Diſtinction, the moſt important Words in the whole Sentence, (an Inconvenience inſeparable from a *Monotony*;) till having rung Changes with his Voice ſufficiently long, he ends his *Chime*, and his Diſcourſe together. Would it be poſſible for me, in this caſe, to hear the good Man, with all the Attention and Regard that his Character or Arguments might otherwiſe claim? Surely no.——But can any one aſſign a Reaſon why ſuch a *Manner* ſhould be deemed Unfit in *private*, and yet abundantly Fit, nay quite agreeable and becoming in *public?* In public, it is true, a more awful Gravity is requiſite: a certain Majeſty is to be aſſumed there. But are theſe inconſiſtent with a Juſt, that is, a Natural Utterance? Or do they depend on an unchanging Circle of Sounds, dictated neither by Judgment, nor Feeling.

There

There is no doubt, but a more vigorous and enlivened Pronunciation is required in the Pulpit than in perſonal Diſcourſe; and the View of a numerous Aſſembly, joined to other Circumſtances of Importance, will or ought to animate the Speaker more. But by how much he is more animated, he will pronounce more naturally, with leſs Cadence, and with greater Variety, Juſtneſs, and Force. Nothing of the kind doth in my Opinion leſſen ſo much the Weight and Authority of a Sermon otherwiſe good, as that taſteleſs Uniformity of *Voice* and *Manner*, which admits of no Character, nor Meaning.

It is doubly unfortunate when Preachers in other reſpects excellent, not only fall into a *Tune*, but a very *unpleaſant* one too; which is, I am afraid, ſometimes the caſe. It is downright ſilly, or quite unharmonious, or both. It offends the Ear, no leſs than the Judgment. It not only takes off from the Beauty of a Diſcourſe in general, and renders it leſs engaging to all, but doth actually prejudice ſeveral againſt it, ſo far as to prevent their reaping any Advantage from it. Where the Tune happens to be any how pleaſant, the caſe to be ſure is not ſo bad. A ſweet, ſonorous, and flowing Voice will, even in ſpite of a wrong Modulation, ſoothe not a little the Generality

Generality of Hearers. Indeed it will rather *ſoothe*, than *touch* them. It will trill mellifluently through the *Ear*, but ſcarce make its way forcibly to the *Heart*. It may ſometimes perhaps raiſe a kind of Tenderneſs, equally ſuperficial and tranſient. I doubt if ever it will ſtrike, tranſport and agitate, like a well turned, ſtrongly expreſſive, and juſtly diverſifyed Pronunciation.

Is *Harmony* then excluded from the Pulpit? By no means: it is of ſingular Uſe and Beauty there. The *Roman* Orator obſerves, that in every Oration there ſhould be what he calls *Cantus ſubobſcurior*; by which, I preſume, he means a real Melody, ariſing from the agreeable Inflexions of the Voice, though not ſo apparent and ſenſible as that of a Compoſition in Muſic, where particular Tones do regularly return at certain fixed Diſtances. Something of the ſame ſort, though ſtill leſs palpable, may be perceived even in the ordinary Converſation of thoſe who talk gracefully.

The right Modulation of the Voice in *Speaking*, may be compared to the Harmony, Variety, and Power of *Numbers* in *Writing*, ſo much ſtudied and practiſed in *ancient* Times, ſo little underſtood or regarded now-a-days. They are founded on the ſame Principles, and productive

productive of the ſame Effects.—*Harmony*, for Inſtance, both in the one and in the other, is plainly pointed out by Nature, that hath formed and attuned the Ear to *muſical Delight*, inſomuch that it is all raviſhed wherever it is ſtruck with a proper Combination of Sounds. It catches eagerly at ſuch, and throws itſelf open with Joy to the enchanting Melody. But then if it happens, that the ſame Sounds, or Combinations of Sounds, return too often, it quickly loſes the pleaſing Senſation, grows tired, and withdraws its Attention. To prevent this, and render the Harmony laſtingly agreeable, it is neceſſary That ſhould be ſupported and enlivened with a well-judged *Variety*; by means of which the Ear being hit in different Ways, and feeling thoſe ſucceſſive Percuſſions at different Intervals of Time, it may ſtill be refreſhed, and kept awake with an Entertainment ever new.

This, I ſuppoſe, may be the principal Reaſon why good Poetry in *Blank Verſe* generally appears ſo far preferable to good Poetry that is written in *Rhyme*, where ſimilar Sounds regularly recurring, do at length pall upon the Ear, which is always expecting them, is never diſappointed, and thence becomes indifferent and dull. Never, I believe, did any who wrote in Rhyme, underſtand Verſification better than

DRYDEN

DRYDEN or POPE. Theſe celebrated Poets ſeem to have weighed and meaſured Sounds with the moſt perfect Exactneſs, and to have given their Numbers all the Grace and Embelliſhment that the Species of Writing I ſpeak of would well receive. Nevertheleſs I much queſtion if any of thoſe can afford the Ear that high continued Tranſport it never fails to receive from moſt of the Numbers of MILTON.

An uniform Cadence in Pronunciation, is like conſtant Rhyme in Poetry, and grows ſtale for the ſame Reaſon; whereas an harmonious Variety in both is always ſure to give freſh Pleaſure. The raiſing and falling, the quickening and retarding, the ſwelling and melting of the Voice with Judgment, are perhaps amongſt the beſt Means to preſerve or to renew Attention. I have often ſeen them have this Effect, when the Preacher had tried every other Method in vain. When the Minds and the Eyes of the People were wandering, I have ſeen them arreſted and fixed all at once, by a ſudden ſinking into a deep *Baſs*, or riſing to a loud *Tenor*, or throwing an *Acute* Accent on a particular Syllable, or *languiſhing* out an affecting Sentence. For myſelf, I have often found one weighty ſignificant Word, when ſeaſonably introduced by a Preacher, and when collecting the whole Em-

phaſis

phaſis of his Voice and Action, he let them fall and reſt on *it* with accumulated Force, make me all ſhiver with a ſacred and awful Delight.

Now theſe and ſuch like Effects may, I imagine, be ſucceſsfully produced by any judicious Performer, who hath acquired a proper Command and Verſatility of Voice. Some Voices indeed are naturally hard and ſtubborn; yet I ſhould think even thoſe might be ſubdued and rendered more flexible, by much Care and Practice, if they are taken in time. What Impediments in Speaking may be conquered by timely Aſſiduity, DEMOSTHENES will ever be a memorable Example.—But many a Voice that was naturally good and melodious, I have obſerved to run in the wildeſt Irregularities, for want of Pains to tame and govern it; when almoſt any thing might have been performed by it, had it been brought under juſt Controul, and taught to move with bold yet eaſy Steps, thro' the whole Round of rhetorical Harmony, if particularly its Movements had been ſo conducted as to keep regular Pace with the Proceſs of the Mind, and to exhibit a lively Reſemblance of that Proceſs.

It is not indeed enough to *pleaſe* the *Ear*, without *impreſſing* the *Soul* of the Hearer. This

cannot be effected by the *Grace* of Numbers, or the *Melody* of Voice alone. There muſt likewiſe be a certain *Propriety* in theſe. This is truly the principal thing in what may be termed the *Art of Sounds*. Without it, all the reſt is only a pretty Play-thing: with it, the whole becomes an efficacious Engine of Perſuaſion. Mr. POPE hath deſcribed it in one Line;

The Sound muſt ſeem an Eccho *to the Senſe.*

When this is the Caſe, the Reſult is that *Power* of Numbers before-mentioned, of which the *Ancients* relate ſuch wonders, and in which HOMER, DEMOSTHENES, VIRGIL, TULLY, and many others amongſt them excelled. Now the Preacher, who is a thorough Artiſt in this way, and whoſe Voice is formed by Nature for real Execution, will know how to raviſh the Soul with reſiſtleſs Paſſion, as well as to enchant the Ear with divine Harmony. By chooſing proper Words, and giving to every Word its proper Place and Emphaſis, he will be able to make his own Ideas dart like Lightning into the Minds of others, and fire or melt them as he pleaſes.

The *Powers* of this Engine I now ſpeak of, are no leſs various than wonderful. He that is Maſter of it will take care to give every one of them

them its due Operation, as Occaſion ſhall require. When, for Inſtance, he would expreſs, or recommend the mild and amiable Feelings of Devotion or Humanity, his Voice will diſſolve into the moſt gentle, flowing, and inſinuating Sounds. When he would teſtify or inſpire an Indignation at Vice, it will roughen into harſher and bolder Tones. When he talks of the moſt venerable and ſtupendous Objects of Religion, or another World, he will compoſe it into a ſlow, majeſtic, ſolemn Pronunciation. When he would warmly aſſert the Intereſts of either, he will employ the moſt lively, pathetic, and invigorated Accents. When he would deſcribe or promote the Meltings of Repentance, or repreſent his Grief for the Follies and Miſery of Mankind, he will melt into tender, plaintive, mournful Meaſures. When his Subject on the other hand leads to Sentiments of Joy or Approbation, his Notes will be ſoft and ſweet, diffuſed and open.——In the *Exordium*, or Introductory Part, his Pronunciation will generally be ſober, tranquil, and reſpectful, not only becauſe there is commonly no Paſſion in the Compoſition of that Part, but likewiſe in order both to gain his Hearers, and huſband his Voice. It will be a little more animated, when he proceeds to *explain*, to *propoſe*, or to *narrate*; but ſtill equable and ſimple, without Emotion, or much Variety. In

ſhort, he will keep to a native Familiarity, ſomewhat reſembling that of Converſation; except where he hath occaſion to relate Events, or touch on Circumſtances, that are intereſting and moving: *There* no doubt his Utterance will be more ſpirited and varied. It will be ſo too, in *proving* and *amplifying*. It will then likewiſe be ready, voluble, powerful, penetrating. Again, in *refuting*, *remonſtrating*, *reproving*, our Preacher will aſſume a Tone of Conviction and Authority: his Articulation will be edged and pointed. Finally, when he arrives at the *Application*; having entered on it after a conſiderable Pauſe, and ſummoned up all his remaining Force, he will then give way to a ſuperior Burſt of religious Vehemence, and like a flaming Bomb bear down all before him: his Voice will break forth with its whole Pathos, Pomp, and Plenitude; every Word will be a freſh Attack, and all the moſt ſounding and triumphant Accents will at once aſcertain his Victory.

It is to be obſerved however, that a Preacher of Judgment will take care, even in the ſtrongeſt Exertions of his Voice, not to go beyond the Feelings of Nature, or the Limits of Decorum; that is, not to run into ranting, airy, or exaggerated Sounds, ſuch as the Subject doth not inſpire, the Pulpit allow, nor the Paſſion juſtify.

Fierce

Fierce and whining Tones muſt be equally avoided. A theatrical Pronunciation would be inconſiſtent with that Seriouſneſs which muſt reign throughout: A certain ingenuous Modeſty, ſupported with a manly Firmneſs of Utterance, will give both a Charm and a Dignity to the whole.

To attain a proper Modulation in the Pulpit may, I believe, be difficult: but I cannot think it is impracticable. Much previous Study and Exerciſe will be of great uſe here. It is to be regretted indeed, that Students and Candidates for the *Miniſtry*, are provided with no *Schools* for their Aſſiſtance in a Branch of Education ſo important to *them*. It is well known, what numerous *Schools* the *Ancients* had amongſt them, for training ſuch of their ingenious Youth as intended to be public Speakers, in all the different Parts of *civil* Eloquence, of which they eſteemed that of *Pronunciation*, and *Action* at large, the moſt eſſential. We find particularly, that when Learning and Arts were in their Zenith at *Athens*, it was held of ſuch Conſequence, that Maſters were retained there at the public Charge, expreſsly to teach it; which they did to all who choſe to attend them, in a public *College*, or *Hall*, ſet apart for that very Purpoſe. It was chiefly from theſe, and ſuch like profeſſed Rhetoricians, that the young Orators of thoſe Times, both in

Greece and *Rome*, learned the Decorum and various Powers of *Action*, not only by hearing and ſeeing *them*, but by actually *practiſing* before them, and receiving their freeſt Corrections, and fineſt Chaſtenings. And it is worthy our Obſervation, that ſome of them, who afterwards ſhone out with the moſt diſtinguiſhed Luſtre, were not aſhamed, even when they had appeared at the *Bar* with much Applauſe, ſtill to continue their Application in this way. The celebrated *Roman* Orator relates of himſelf, that, after he had *pleaded* two whole Years with great Reputation, he went into *Aſia*, on purpoſe to learn a greater Correctneſs, Variety, and Temperance of *Manner*; that with this View he ſtaid ſix Months at *Athens*, then travelled through the whole Country, and from thence came to *Rhodes*; ſpending in all two Years abroad; during which time he had ſtudied and declaimed with no fewer than *ſeven* Maſters! by whom he improved ſo much, that at his return his Form of Speaking was almoſt quite altered.——Need I add to theſe Facts this other one, that neither he, nor a ſtill more celebrated Orator, the admirable *Athenian*, thought it beneath them, to ſubmit to have their *Action* corrected by public *Players*, the former having applied with this Deſign to ROSCIUS and ÆSOP, and the latter, to SATYRUS? Of ſuch vaſt Importance did thoſe

thoſe noble *Ancients* reckon every thing that could conduce to accompliſh them in their Profeſſion?

May we not ſafely affirm, that the want of this Taſte and theſe Advantages in *modern* Times, is a great Part of the Cauſe, why we ſee comparatively ſo few eminent Speakers in every kind? How much the *Pulpit* ſuffers by it, is too manifeſt to be denied. The only Way, as Matters ſtand, to ſupply it in ſome meaſure, would, I imagine, be for young Gentlemen, both before and after they commence Preachers, to exerciſe themſelves very often in reading and reciting aloud in private, not only by themſelves, but chiefly in the hearing of one or more judicious Friends, if any ſuch they can find, who would correct them with all manner of candid Severity.

To be a little more particular; I would humbly propoſe, that they ſhould chooſe ſome of the beſt Compoſitions of different kinds, in Verſe and in Proſe, but particularly ſome of the beſt Sermons on different Subjects, and ſometimes *read*, ſometimes *recite* thoſe, both in the Houſe, and in the open Air, as they find Occaſion. Speaking frequently in the open Air, will at once greatly ſtrengthen their Lungs, and improve their Voice. When either reading or reciting, let them take care always to pronounce natu-

rally, roundly, and eaſily; to place the Accents right, that is on thoſe Words or Syllables on which the Senſe turns; to keep up the Voice to the End of every Period, that it may not dye away, or ſink down, as too often happens; to carry it even and ſteady, as in common Converſation, when there is no Painting, Paſſion, or Emotion in the Words; to give it a greater or leſs Degree of *Variety* and *Action* when there is, in Proportion to the Degree in which any of thoſe takes place; in every Accommodation of the *Sound* to the *Sentiment*, ſtill conſulting the Standard of Nature, or reflecting *how* a Man would ſay ſuch a thing who *felt* it in *real* Life, where Art and Study were quite out of the queſtion. Let them be ſure to ſpeak all the Words full and diſtinct, without *eating* any part of them, or leaving thoſe Parts *evaneſcent*, on which the principal Streſs may happen to lye. But let them beware of dragging them along, or drawling them out, as if they were counting each Letter, or meaſuring each Syllable. Let them, as SHAKESPEAR expreſſes it, in his ſtrongly deſcriptive Manner, ſpeak them *trippingly* on the Tongue, not *mouthing* them as many do, nor dwelling on one more than another, where the Emphaſis does not require it. Let them carefully avoid ſtraining their Voices, as the ſame great Maſter ſays,

——*Like*

—— Like a Player,
Bellowing his Paſſion till he break the Spring,
And his rack'd Voice jar to the Audience.

On the other hand, let them never ſink them below the Pitch that would be neceſſary to make them heard. At the ſame time, let them accuſtom themſelves, by all means, to bring them down, at pleaſure; when, for inſtance, they enter on a new Topic, or would ſay ſomething to ſurprize or ſtrike; or, in ſhort, when either the Senſe, the Paſſion, or their own Conveniency, ſhall render it proper. Their ſtudying to *melt* their Sounds into a fine *Liquidity*, or to *ſwell* them into an ample *Majeſty*, is of peculiar Importance to the Grace and Efficacy of their public Performances. Next to *following Nature*, which is the general and all-controuling Law in the Art I talk of; This is perhaps the higheſt Thing in the whole Magic of Pronunciation.

When our young Performers catch themſelves tranſgreſſing, in thoſe private Exerciſes, any of the Rules above-mentioned, I would adviſe them to ſtop immediately; and going back to the Place where they firſt went wrong, to endeavour to correct that Error, and not to leave

off their Endeavour till they have corrected it. It is to be obſerved, that if their Ear is good, their Pronunciation will naturally be *numerous* and *muſical*; nor will the neceſſary Breaks and Tranſitions in the Voice take off this Harmony, excepting where the want of it may have a better Effect, which is ſometimes the caſe, where the Speaker is tranſported into a more than ordinary Vehemence.

Their Progreſs in this Study will be incomparably ſwifter and more ſucceſsful, if, as I hinted before, they receive from time to time the Aſſiſtance and Animadverſions of Friendſhip. I need ſcarce add, what is always to be underſtood, that they muſt ſtrive to enter into the genuine *Spirit* of every thing they recite or read, to feel each Paſſion, and to have each Idea ſtrongly *tranſfuſed* into their own Minds, without which all muſt needs appear but forced and formal.

By an unwearied and obſtinate Practice of this kind, a certain living Habit, and commanding Taſte, may I think be acquired at laſt; which will eaſily and undeſignedly regulate their future Addreſſes, when the firſt trembling and troubleſome Eſſays are over. None who aſpire at the high Character, of a CHRISTIAN PREACHER,

PREACHER, will, I hope, deem ſuch a Practice too laborious, if by means of it he may be qualified for ſuſtaining that Character with greater Dignity and Succeſs; eſpecially when he recollects the aſtoniſhing Pains that were taken of old by the ambitious Students of *Heathen* Oratory. It will be very hard, indeed, if thoſe Candidates, for a little uncertain Power, or unſubſtantial Praiſe amongſt Mortals, ſhould be found to have uſed a Diligence to excel, which not all the nobleſt Principles, and brighteſt Proſpects, of *Chriſtianity* could inſpire.

As to that Part of *Action* which relates to *Geſture*; it requires no doubt to be right modelled as well as the Voice. The right modelling of it, is an eſſential Ingredient in that Eloquence of the *Body*, of which the *ancient* Rhetoricians ſpeak ſo much, and of the Effects whereof all Mankind are ſo deeply ſenſible. But how much it is neglected by the Generality of Preachers, we have, I am ſorry to ſay, too frequent Proofs. Do we not ſee ſome, for example, who ſtand quite ſtill and motionleſs in the Pulpit, appearing there little other than *ſpeaking Statues*; which muſt ſurely be altogether wrong, if the Principles before ſpecified be well founded. Again, do we not ſee many run into ſuch Geſticulations, as, not to ſay how ungrace-

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ful they are, ſeem neither the natural Reſult, nor juſt Expreſſion, of any one Sentiment or Feeling whatſoever; which, on the ſame Principles, muſt certainly be as widely wrong? And finally, do we not ſee moſt fall into an Uniformity of *Geſture*, no leſs improper than an Uniformity of *Voice?* In truth, the ſame general Rules that are applicable to the latter, are alike applicable to the former. Nature is equally to be followed in both.

When the Mind feels *no* Emotion, there is naturally as little *Action* in the *Body*, as Variation in the *Voice*. When the Mind *feels* an Emotion of any ſort, the Body doth naturally partake of it, as well as the Voice. The *Body*, when not controuled by any foreign Influence, is in ſome Senſe like a well-tuned Inſtrument to the *Mind*. It conveys clear and full whatever Notes or Meaſures That plays upon it. The ſeveral Touches of the laſt are communicated diſtinctly to the whole Length of the Strings, ſo as to make them vibrate every where with a Force proportioned to thoſe Touches. In plain Terms, the Organs of *Motion* are as much and as variouſly affected by the Impulſes of the Soul, as are the Organs of *Sound*; I mean when the external Frame is ſuffered to follow freely that internal Mover. It is therefore,

fore, I apprehend, the Preacher's Buſineſs to obſerve attentively the different Movements, which are produced in the Body, by the different Impulſes of the Soul; ſuch as Admiration, Averſion, Joy, Sorrow, Surprize, Pity, Indignation, and the like. Thoſe Movements are really the *Language* of Nature, no leſs than the Sounds that are uttered by her on the ſame Occaſions; and a Language as eaſily, and as univerſally intelligible. In effect, the Geſtures of the Preacher muſt *ſpeak*, as well as his Voice; muſt expreſs his Meaning, and exhibit his Feelings along with *it*, or they are good for nothing, mere *inexplicable Dumb ſhew*, as SHAKESPEAR ſtrongly phraſes it. As he adviſes the *Player*, ſo muſt the *Preacher* likewiſe *ſuit the Action to the Word, and the Word to the Action.* He will do this properly, if he acts, not for the ſake of his *appearing* to be moved, but only becauſe he *is* moved. Indeed he ought never to act but when he is as it were *impelled*, or ſuppoſed to be impelled, by the Workings of his Soul, and in proportion to that Impulſe.

If he follows this Rule, he will have no Geſtures at all, or only now and then a ſlight Motion of the Arm, or ſimple Pointing with the Finger, in thoſe Parts of his Diſcourſe, which are diſpaſſionate and cool. In thoſe Parts where he

is

is warmed and rouſed, his Geſtures will immediately ſhew it: his Soul will diffuſe itſelf thro' all the Powers of the animal Machine; every Wheel will be wound up to its juſt Pitch; and every Motion will come off free and clean. The Inflexion and Viciſſitudes of his *Geſture*, in like manner as thoſe of his *Voice*, will anſwer the ſame End in *Speaking*, which is anſwered in *Painting* by that rich Variety of Colouring, and thoſe bold Succeſſions of Light and Shade, which give ſuch Life, Luſtre, and Expreſſion to a Work, as command our Attention and Applauſe. His Geſture will ſtill be varied with his Feelings. When *theſe* fall, ſo will *that*, always; when *theſe* riſe, ſo will *that*, generally: I ſay generally; for theſe Feelings, in a truly pathetic Preacher, may be ſometimes ſo ſtrong, as in a ſort to overpower his outward Frame, and by a kind of ſacred Violence to ſuſpend for a while its Action; in which ſtill and awful *Suſpence*, there is a calm deep Eloquence affecting beyond any Power of Motion.

It is to be obſerved, that a Preacher's Geſtures are to *accompany* his Words, never to come *after* them, ſeldom to *precede* them. Sometimes, perhaps, they may precede them, when the Preacher ſeems to be meditating intenſely how to vent the ſtrong and ſolemn Swellings of his Soul.

Soul. In that Caſe, a ſtretching out of the Arm ſlowly, or laying it ſoftly upon the Boſom, before any of the Words are uttered, will have an amazing Effect to prepare the Hearers for what is to follow, and to ſtrike them with profound Veneration.

It is likewiſe to be remembered, that when the Preacher riſes to the utmoſt Contention and Vehemence, it muſt ſtill be under great Conduct; he muſt run into no undue Tranſport; a Degree of *Enthuſiaſm* muſt, no doubt, warm and actuate him; but it is the noble Enthuſiaſm of Truth and Virtue; a tranſcendent and prevailing Flame, but a Flame ſupported by unaffected Goodneſs. Senſe and Judgment muſt always be employed, to govern the Hurry of Imagination, and to temper the Heat of *Action*. As the wonderful Writer laſt mentioned expreſſes it on another Occaſion; he muſt *uſe all gently, and in the very Torrent, Tempeſt, and as I may ſay, Whirlwind of his Paſſion, he muſt acquire, and beget a Temperance that may give it Smoothneſs.*—He muſt *not be too tame neither*, nor ſink into an enervated Dulneſs, or flaccid Droniſhneſs of Geſture. Whatever is either *over-done*, or *comes off heavily*, will probably be diſpleaſing, will certainly be unnatural. To hit the Medium, a Preacher muſt at the ſame time

time *poſſeſs* himſelf of, and be *poſſeſſed* by, his Subject; a difficult, but a glorious Attainment! Where this is in any meaſure happily acquired, and where ſuch a *Manner*, as I have juſt now briefly delineated, is practiſed; how ſtrangely different will the Effects be, from thoſe of a noiſy bluſtering *Delivery* on the one hand, or of a formal and frivolous one on the other; where there is no real Paſſion, no beautiful Variety, no piercing, moving, maſculine Energy; nothing but an unfeeling and ſenſeleſs Agitation, without Cauſe, Meaning, or End; or elſe an idle, ſpiritleſs *Sawing* of the Air everlaſtingly. From hence, by the way, it appears how much They are miſtaken, who exclaim againſt *all* Geſtures in Preaching, by taking their Ideas only from *thoſe* generally made uſe of; whether they are of the cooler ſort, or conſiſt of a mighty Stir and Buſtle, a violent Rapping upon the Pulpit, a perpetual Shaking of the Head, or an outrageous Toſſing and Clapping of the Hands. Such Motions as the firſt, will not readily touch any body; ſuch Motions as the laſt, may ſuit the Levity of a *French*, or the Extravagance of a *Spaniſh*, or an *Italian* Auditory; but will hardly, I doubt, be agreeable to the more ſolid and ſober Turn of *Britiſh* Hearers, who will be apt to remain cold and frozen, when a Preacher hath

hath in this Way worked himſelf perhaps into a profuſe Sweat.

It might appear too minute, to enter into a Detail of the particular Motions, that are moſt adapted to expreſs different Objects and Paſſions in public Speaking; though no leſs a Man than QUINTILIAN did not think it beneath him. Thoſe who would ſee this, and indeed every other part of *Action*, fully and elegantly repreſented, may conſult that able Rhetorician. But Senſe and Reflexion alone may be ſufficient to diſcover its principal Out-lines. Theſe will teach a Man, for inſtance, when he would expreſs what is ſuppoſed to be exalted in Place or in Kind, to point upwards; when he would expreſs ſomething low in either, or when he would urge an Argument with greater Force, to point downwards; when he would give an Idea of Things oppoſite in Nature or in Situation, to point to the one and to the other Hand; when he talks of himſelf, or brings in another talking of *himſelf*, or would repreſent whatever is moſt dear, delightful, or feeling in *Humanity*, whatever is moſt inward, vital, or fundamental in *Religion*, in ſhort, whatever is moſt intimately connected with the *Heart*, ſometimes to touch it with the Finger, at other times to lay his Hand upon it either with a gentle Deliberation, or with

with a pathetic Preſſure, as the Occaſion requires; when he would teſtify deep Concern, or great Earneſtneſs, to give his Head a ſolemn and graceful Motion, and ſo of the reſt. The proper Movements of the Hand and Body, for manifeſting the ſeveral Affections of the Mind, are better known to every Man than they can be deſcribed by any.

A Feeling of what is *decent* and *natural*, will eaſily ſuggeſt, that a Preacher ſhould ſtill preſerve an erect and ſteady, yet free and eaſy Poſture, ſuch as may ſpeak a modeſt Firmneſs, and manly Compoſure, equally remote from Forwardneſs and Timidity, from a futile or flippant Carriage on the one hand, and a conſtrained or creeping Behaviour on the other; that ſhrugging of the Shoulders, balancing of the Hands, lolling on the Elbows, writhing of the Body, and leaning now on the one ſide, then on the other, ought all carefully to be avoided; in ſhort, that whatever appears either light or ſtiff, arrogant or abject, irreverent or lazy, is ſtrictly to be guarded againſt in the Pulpit.

The *Connoiſſeurs* in this Art are of opinion, that the Speaker ſhould move always from the *left* to the *right*, but neither much nor quick; that the Hands ſhould never be raiſed higher than

than the Eyes, nor brought lower than the Edge of the Pulpit; that the *left* Hand ſhould never be employed to expreſs any thing by itſelf, but only in Concurrence with the *right*; that the latter being the Hand of *Power*, and that which almoſt every body makes greateſt uſe of, ſhould therefore be *chiefly* employed by the Orator; and that both the Hands ſhould ſtill be kept within his View; Rules that appear in general not unreaſonable or improper. There are ſeveral other little Decorums to be minded by a Preacher, which are beſt learned from the moſt approved and legitimate Models, in Conjunction with thoſe Maſters, who are allowed to have treated of the Art with the greateſt Taſte and Delicacy.

But the grand Maxim already inculcated, is always to be remembered here, that the Appearance of *Study* or *Deſign*, in theſe or any other Circumſtances of a Preacher's Deportment in the *Pulpit*, would abſolutely ſpoil the whole; juſt as *that* Carriage in *Company*, which looks not eaſy and unaffected, loſes all its Grace, how proper and exact ſoever it may be otherwiſe. One that is *born* with a good Mien (for that ſeems really ſometimes the caſe,) will, if a Preacher, ſlide almoſt without Thought into a graceful Demeanour in public. One that is *not*, will find it more difficult; and can only be ſuppoſed to acquire

quire it by Time, by Practice, and by friendly Criticiſm, but above all by cultivating a ſtrong Perception of the various Decorums of Life and Manners. If he can, in the beginning, guard ſufficiently againſt what is really *diſagreeable*, it is well: what is really *agreeable*, will come afterwards, provided he continue to watch over himſelf with ſevere and unremitted Attention. Indeed I am apt to believe *this* part of *Action* ſo hard to be attained, that I am not ſure whether young Adventurers in the Preaching-way, ought to give into any Geſtures at all, in their firſt ſetting out; except ſuch as are but ſlight, and inconſiderable. If they do, it is ten to one but they run into the redundant, the florid or the formal. I have known ſome who were exceeding ſenſible of their having erred in this reſpect, by indulging a certain Warmth of Nature, that led them into an Exceſs and Irregularity of *Action*, for which they were juſtly cenſurable. In fine, it is only by great Self-command, much Self-correction, and the moſt powerful Feeling of Truth and Goodneſs, that a Preacher can arrive at that temperate, chaſtiſed, and nervous *Manner*, which is the juſt Conſummation, and higheſt Glory of the Art.

With regard to what may be ſtiled the *Action of the Countenance* in preaching; it cannot be doubted

doubted but this is likewiſe a very eſſential Part of the *Exterior* of Eloquence, that ought not to be neglected. Nevertheleſs it cannot be denied, but in fact it is too much neglected, by the Generality of Preachers; ſome ſhutting their Eyes, whilſt they are preaching; others looking inward, as it were, inſtead of looking round them; others fixing their Attention on any thing, but the Audience; ſome throwing their Features into ſuch Diſtortions, as quite disfigure the *human Face divine*, as MILTON ſomewhere calls it; ſome contracting their Looks into an over-ſtrained Solemnity; others letting them run into the worſe Extreme of a puerile Levity; and too many wearing a frivolous and frigid Aſpect, which conveys no Idea, and makes no Impreſſion.

Now let any Man conſult his Feelings, and thoſe will tell him how much all this is out of Nature; and how great a Superiority to ſuch Performers, in point of true Execution, *that* Preacher would have, whoſe Face *looked* what his Words *ſpoke*, from whoſe Eyes his very Soul ſeemed to *emane*, and who to all the *Muſic* of his Voice, and *Majeſty* of his Geſtures, joined the *Significance* of a ſenſible, ſpirited, and recollected Air. What a ſerious Pleaſure muſt the Hearers, or rather the Beholders, feel, when they

they obſerve in the Countenance of him who addreſſes them, the Awfulneſs of Religion ſweetened with the Meekneſs of Charity, the Fire of the zealous *Preacher* chaſtened with the Modeſty of the unaſſuming *Chriſtian*, and a Mind fraught with the Idea of the Subject, yet not forgetful of the Preſence of the Auditory, or of the Reſpect that is due to them.

It is not, perhaps, one of the leaſt Entertainments we receive from Converſation with our Friends, to obſerve whilſt they are ſpeaking to us the various Turns of their Features, the various Radiations of their Hearts, in their Eyes; to obſerve theſe glancing with all the bland Lightening of an animated Tenderneſs, or melting into the mild Suffuſions of Sympathy, or beaming with the cordial Smiles of Congratulation, or darting forth the very Flame of Virtue. Is it poſſible, on ſuch Occaſions, not to catch the lovely Contagion, not to feel the Soul of Friendſhip riſing on *our* part, the correſpondent Glow of Sentiment excited, and the Breaſt heaving with reciprocal Emotion? Surely we may reckon theſe amongſt the fineſt Senſations of Humanity.—Is not the Caſe ſomewhat ſimilar, when we have Acceſs to hear a Preacher whoſe *Countenance* in the Pulpit is a ſort of bright *Mirrour* to his *Mind*, in which we diſcern the

ſucceſſive

ſucceſſive Images of Truth and Virtue, that riſe up there? Let us imagine, that we behold his Eyes now effuſing the ſoft Radiance of Goodneſs, and anon piercing ſeverely into the Sinner's Boſom; that we behold his Face kindled into the ſerene Raptures of Devotion, or ſaddened with Sorrow for human Miſery, or burning with Indignation at human Folly, or opening into a candid Complacence in the ſeveral Inſtances of Happineſs and Worth to be found amongſt Mankind: can we help attending to thoſe *intuitive* Diſcoveries of his Heart, or perceiving our own beat with a deep-felt ſympathetic Ardour?

Some Faces indeed are naturally not ſo moveable, ſo *ſpiritual* (as the *French* would term it) or ſo characteriſtic, as others. Yet you ſhall ſee thoſe Faces which are leaſt ſo, abundantly expreſſive and intelligible, when the Mind is thoroughly awake, or rouſed on any intereſting Occaſion. Beſides, it is to be obſerved, that the Dignity of the Pulpit doth not allow of too *picturesque* an Air, or of ſo minute a Diſpoſition of the Features as takes place in the *mimic* Scenes of the *Drama*, or even in the *original* Scenes of *Life*. The Imitation muſt be true and diſcernable in its great Out-lines, but not too cloſe or particular. It is principally the *Eyes* which muſt be the *Index* of the Soul. An unaffected Gravity

and

and Sacredneſs of Aſpect in general muſt ſtill prevail; ſuch as may keep the *Hearers* in mind, that they are come there to be *inſtructed* in the Will of the *divine Legiſlator*, and ſuch as may ſhew that the *Preacher* hath not forgotten he is come there to *interpret* that Will to immortal Creatures.

It may be thought perhaps by ſome, that the Standard of *Pulpit Action* here propoſed, is ſet too high. I might content myſelf with pointing out to ſuch, ſome Preachers who have happily arrived at it, or at leaſt who have approached near to it. But I wiſh they would take the Trouble to look through *other* Profeſſions, ſuch as *Law*, *Phyſic*, *Surgery*, *Painting*, *Muſic*, the *Theatre*, and many more, not to ſpeak of the *mechanic* Arts; and to obſerve what an extenſive Skill, and exquiſite Dexterity, Numbers in thoſe Profeſſions have attained, by the Aſſiſtance of Genius, Study, Practice, and a ſuperlative Ambition to excel. How many nice and ſubtil Circumſtances will they attend to at once! With what Rapidity will they dart from one thing to another! With what a piercing *Acumen*, and daring *Enthuſiaſm*, will they perform in their reſpective Ways! And in ſuch of thoſe Profeſſions as immediately require an *Hand*, what a prodigious Fineſſe, and Dexterity, do many of the

the Practitioners acquire! Even where there is little or no Genius, it is well known that many will go very ſurpriſing Lengths in different Arts, chiefly or ſolely by the dint of a perſevering and all-conquering Aſſiduity. The Art we have been conſidering, is ſurely a very noble one: it merits the Ambition of the moſt exalted Mind. What a Shame then is it, that ſo few of its Profeſſors—But I ſpare an Order of Men, whoſe Inſtitution is Divine, whoſe Intention is the moſt wiſe and benevolent, and which hath produced ſome of the brighteſt Ornaments of human Kind.

It is unqueſtionable that in this, as in every other Profeſſion, ſome are qualified, originally, to reach a much greater Maſtery than others. Some are endowed by Nature with what I may call a *pathetic* Soul, that feels every Impreſſion in a tranſcendent Degree; together with a certain *winged* Force of Genius, that bears them triumphantly through every Attempt. Whereas others, perhaps the greater Part, have Minds naturally *flat* and *feeble* in compariſon. But even too many, that have received *Wings* from the All-forming Mind, ſuffer them, I fear, to moult and periſh, for want of exerting and pruning them with Care. Probably there are but few of thoſe that are admitted into the Preaching-order, to whom the common Parent hath been ſo ſparing

of his Gifts, as not to be able, by his Aid, and their own Application, to riſe above Contempt. Nor ſhould the Idea I have ventured to offer of the Faculty in queſtion, be pronounced by any totally impracticable, till ſuch time as they have honeſtly and vigorouſly endeavoured at it, and found, after a long Trial, all their Endeavours vain.— But ſuppoſe they ſhould fall ſhort of the *Perfection* of the Art, ſtill the Attempt is brave and honourable; and there are Degrees of Excellence, which, though not equal in Efficacy or in Reputation to the *higheſt*, may be attended however with ſuch conſiderable Shares of both, as ſhall abundantly recompence all their Labour.

I will freely own, that a very weak or bad Voice may in ſome Caſes prove an unſurmountable Obſtacle; though in others I have ſeen it tolerably got over, by much Practice, and obſtinate Perſeverance. Some too may apprehend Diſcouragement from the want of an *Ear:* but that appears of leſs Conſequence by far; ſince, though they ſhould be incapable of the *Grace* and *Harmony* of Sounds, they may, notwithſtanding attain ſufficiently the *Propriety* and *Power* of theſe, which is undoubtedly the principal Thing in mere Pronunciation. I cannot however but mention here, that I once knew a Preacher, the beſt indeed take him altogether I ever

" deteſt appearing cold to the Intereſts of his " GOD, and diſdain burning Incenſe in *his* " Temple, and on *his* Altar, to the deſpicable " Idol of *Popularity*. He will addreſs his Fel- " low-worſhippers with deep and awful Con- " cern, in the *Words of Truth and Soberneſs*, " like one ſtanding in the *Preſence*, and ſpeak- " ing in the *Name* of JEHOVAH. And what " he ſpeaks will carry ſuch an Air of ſacred " Simplicity, and undiſſembled Worth, as muſt " command at the ſame time Belief and Reve- " rence. Even the moſt familiar and ordinary " Things he utters will *touch*, being uttered " from a feeling Heart. But his more im- " portant and ſolemn Sentiments will *ſtrike*, " like ſo many ſublime *Reſponſes* iſſuing from " the Centre of ſome venerable *Sanctuary*.

" Believe me, one plain ſerious Diſcourſe " breathed out from the Depth of *your* Breaſts, " will penetrate *ours* more effectually than an " hundred fine flouriſhed Harangues, which " appear the Labour of the Brain only, or the " mere Play of an artificial Rhetoric. Dege- " nerate as the moſt of us Hearers are, be " aſſured we ſecretly reſpect and admire the " Image of *Virtue* wherever we behold it; but " above all we reſpect and admire it in a " *Clergyman*. How inſincere ſoever many of

" us may be, we love to hear *the Language of*
" *the Heart*; it hath ſomething in it ſo genu-
" ine, ſo native, ſo emphatical. We are
" charmed to ſee a Preacher in good earneſt
" with us: we think he regards *us*, and be-
" lieves *himſelf*; and therefore we are inclined
" both to regard and believe him. When *his*
" *Soul* flies out into his Diſcourſe, *ours* imme-
" diately breaks away as it were to meet it.
" If the Flame of holy Affection really burns
" in his Boſom, it will not fail to burſt out;
" and when it doth, it will inſtantly ſeize each
" ſympathetic Boſom, and run and dart and
" ſpread like ſome ſudden Conflagration.

" We are all ſtrangely delighted and moved
" with what is natural. Let what you ſay be
" but natural; and it will of courſe be plea-
" ſing and perſuaſive. But Men only ſpeak
" *naturally*, when they ſpeak *ſincerely*, that is,
" what they *think* and *feel*. Take care to
" think and to feel the very Things you would
" inſpire; you ſhall then, and then alone, be
" truly eloquent. Every Addreſs will then
" flow from an inward Source; that *Well of*
" *living Water* your Maſter ſpeaks of. Every
" Thought will be tranſparent; every Word,
" Look, and Motion, will preſent the Picture
" of your Mind. The Ornaments of Air,

" Voice,

ever knew, who really received but little Pleaſure from the fineſt *Muſic* he could hear, and could even liſten with perfect Coolneſs to *Airs* that would have thrown ſome others into Rapture, who yet delivered himſelf in the Pulpit with the moſt harmonious Voice, and *compoſed* with a Flow, a Fullneſs, and a Beauty of *Numbers*, that I have ſcarce ever ſeen equalled by any *modern* Writer in Proſe.

After all, it muſt be acknowledged, that there is *one* Qualification which if a Preacher wants, all the *others* he can be ſuppoſed to have will appear but poor and defective. The Qualification I mean, is a WARM AND WORTHY HEART. Here, every Preacher who would deſerve the Name, muſt begin and end. And if my Pen could become *vocal* on this Theme, it ſhould call on every one who bears that Name, to bend the chief Current of his Study hither.——The *Action* of the *Body*, however decent, correct, or proper, is in itſelf but the mere *Mechaniſm* of the Art, the outward Form of eloquent Addreſs. It is the *Action* of the *Soul*, the inward Glowing of that *celeſtial Fire*, that muſt give Breath, Motion, and Vigour to all.

Had I Occaſion to converſe in this Subject, with thoſe young Men, who have devoted them-

ſelves to the *Church*, methinks I would addreſs them in ſome ſuch Manner as the following: "*Gentlemen*, the Profeſſion You have choſen "is inexpreſſibly noble. There cannot be a "more grand or a more beneficent Deſign, "than that of making Men *good* and *happy*. "I ſincerely wiſh you all manner of Succeſs. "I doubt not in the leaſt of your ſucceeding, "if before you attempt to recommend Reli-"gion to *others*, you take care to cultivate an "high commanding Senſe of it in *yourſelves*. "Such a Senſe of it, like ſome divine inſpir-"ing Genius, will at once conduct and ani-"mate you.——Do but figure to yourſelves "a Preacher, who feels the Charm of Good-"neſs, who underſtands the Worth of immortal "Minds, who is impreſſed with the whole "Weight of Eternity. Will ſuch a Preacher "content himſelf with a dry Inſipidity of *Man-"ner*, and appear quite regardleſs whether he "affects his Audience or not? Or will he con-"fine his Attention to the bare Formality of "Art, and ſeem only ſolicitous to *perſonate* "with Applauſe, to ſtrut in the Parade of a "gaudy Eloquence, and ſparkle an Hour in "the public Eye? Oh no! he will equally "hate ſuch Indifference on the one hand, and "ſcorn ſuch Pedantry on the other. He will "conſider himſelf as a *Prieſt* of the *Moſt High*,

"deteſt

" one who was at once a King, a Saint, and " a Poet, expreſſes it, *ſee Light in* GOD's *Light:* " You will behold divine *Objects* through a " divine *Medium*; and when you behold *ſuch* " Objects through *ſuch* a Medium, they can- " not, I think, fail to appear exquiſitely fair " and inchanting. By thoſe Approaches too, " you will catch a benign Heat from that " boundleſs Fire of Love, which flows for ever " from the original Fountain of Love, and in- " ſinuates itſelf powerfully into every Breaſt " that lies open to its ſacred Influences, ex- " panding and cheriſhing all the Principles of " Humanity.

" Then, by frequently ſtretching your Minds " to take in the Ideas of infinite Perfection, " they muſt of Neceſſity ſwell and ſoar into a " peculiar Amplitude and Elevation. The " ſame Exerciſes likewiſe, by often calling " forth the beſt Powers of the Soul into *Act*, and " winding it up to the higheſt *Pitch* of Senti- " ment and Affection, will prevent the Lan- " guor, that might otherwiſe grow upon you " from your conſtant Familiarity with ſpiri- " tual Subjects, will preſerve in you a peculiar " Vivacity of Soul, or Exquiſiteneſs of Tem- " perament, and make every religious String, " ſo to ſay, more intenſe and tinnient.

" What

" What fine Effects all this muſt have on " your public Appearances, not only by throw- " ing more Light, Warmth, and noble Paſſion " into your *Compoſitions*, but by transfuſing an " higher Flame through all your *Manner*, and " rendering it more vivid, more ſtrenuous, and " more exalted; you, *Gentlemen*, can better " imagine, than I can tell you. In ſhort, " by means of ſuch an Intercourſe with Hea- " ven, you will ſtep from your *Cloſets* into " the *Pulpit* breathing a certain ethereal Air, " and labouring with the very Spirit of Truth " and Love, which flows from the *Divinity*, " and tends towards him."——

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" Voice, and Geſture with which you ſtrive " to ſet off your Sermons, will ſeem not ſo " much mere *Ornaments*, as *living Graces*, the " amiable Offſpring of a beauteous Soul.

" Need I obſerve to you, that there muſt " ever be a ſenſible Difference between the Per- " formance of *that* Preacher in whoſe Breaſt " nothing reigns but Irreligion or Indifference, " and *his* whoſe Heart is fraught with Piety, " and warmed with all the generous Kindlings " of a fervent Virtue. Something hollow or " worthleſs will certainly be diſcovered by a " ſagacious Eye, in the Performances of the " one: an Air of Sincerity, Devotion, and Be- " nevolence, will always appear in thoſe of " the other.— That fervent Virtue I juſt now " ſpoke of, will be a kind of *intellectual* Sun, " fixed in the Centre of the *human* Syſtem: " it will not only unfold and invigorate the " Powers of the *Soul*, dilate and brighten all " its Conceptions; but extend, on Occaſions, " its Influence to the *Body*, illuminate every " Feature, give Spirit to the Melody of Sound, " and Strength to the Nerve of Motion. In " this Caſe, the ſeveral Parts of *Action* will be " but the *Diſpreadings* of thoſe internal Rays, " which will ſtream and flaſh out with irre- " ſiſtible Power.

" Beſides,

" Beſides, a Conſciouſneſs of *ſuperior Worth*
" will add a peculiar Dignity and Freedom to
" all your Addreſſes; at the ſame time that its
" never-failing Companion, a *ſuperior Modeſty*,
" will prevent any thing like Preſumption or
" Forwardneſs.—Then by cultivating a quick
" and ſtrong Senſibility to the beſt Intereſts of
" Mankind, you will acquire in a greater De-
" gree a certain flowing Tenderneſs, or be-
" nevolent Meltingneſs of Nature; which,
" when ſupported by real Senſe and Spirit, I
" have always obſerved to ſoften and diſſolve
" an Audience, beyond any thing whatever.
" There is, a Tear,—yes, a manly Tear, may
" be ſhed by Compaſſion over the Frailties of
" human Nature and Miſeries of human Kind,
" forced out by a big-ſwollen Heart: I would
" never have you aſhamed of it. It is the
" Tear of Virtue. It becomes the *Chriſtian*
" Orator well: JESUS wept.—

" Permit me to add, that you muſt join to
" all your other Qualifications for the Pulpit, a
" liberal and ſublime *Devotion*, which will be
" of the greateſt Uſe in all your Perform-
" ances; by often approaching to the *Fountain*
" of Wiſdom and of Goodneſs, you will every
" Day grow wiſer and better: You will, as

" one

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